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Anime & Manga Monthly

ANIMERICA

July, 1993
Vol. 1, No. 5

Exclusive! The ANIMERICA Interview

HAYAO MIYAZAKI

Manga Features

MERMAID FOREST

by Rumiko Takahashi

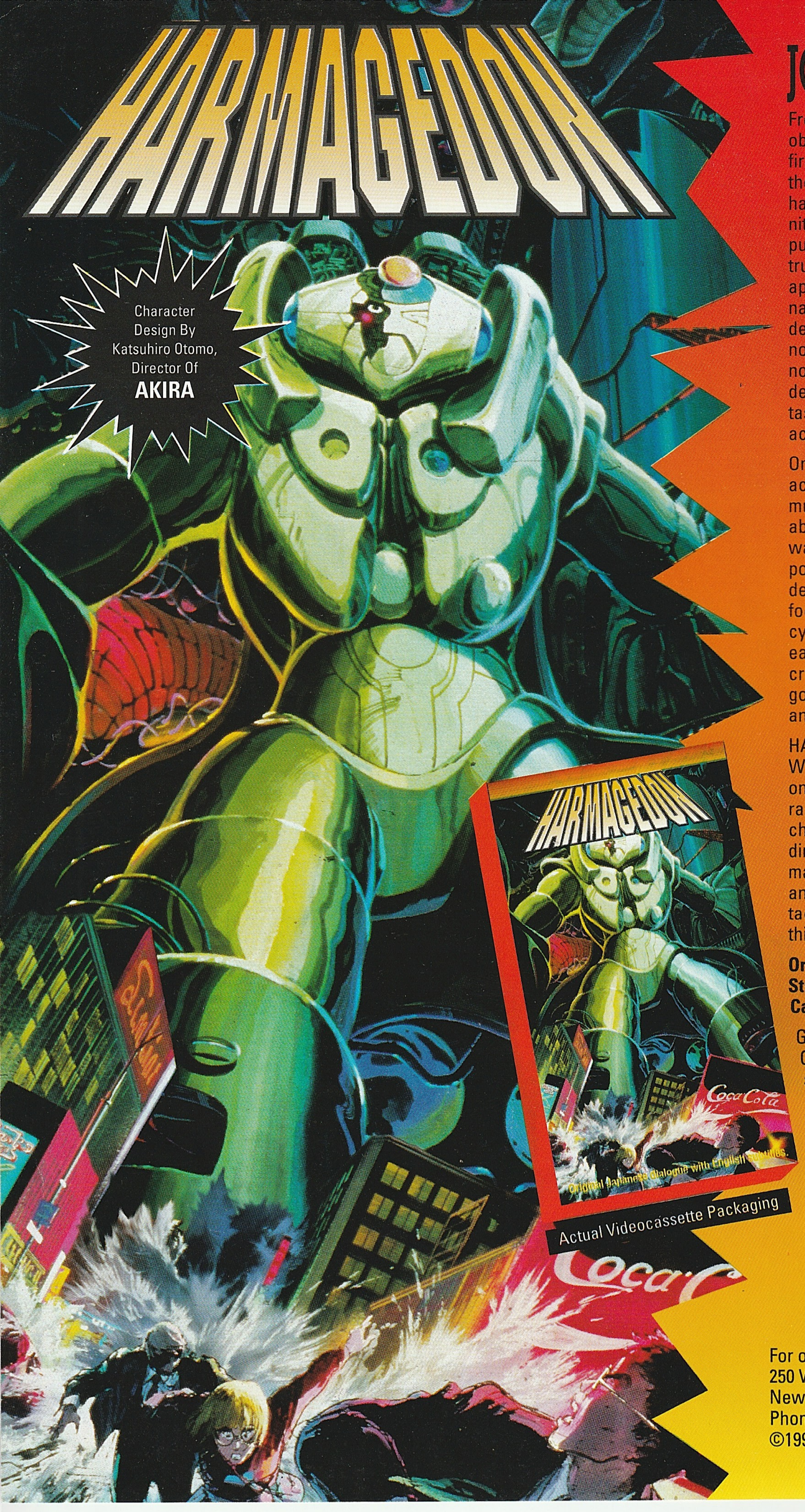
AD POLICE

by Tony Takezaki

Special Color Manga Feature!

CRIMSON PIG, "THE AGE OF THE FLYING BOAT"

HARMAGEDON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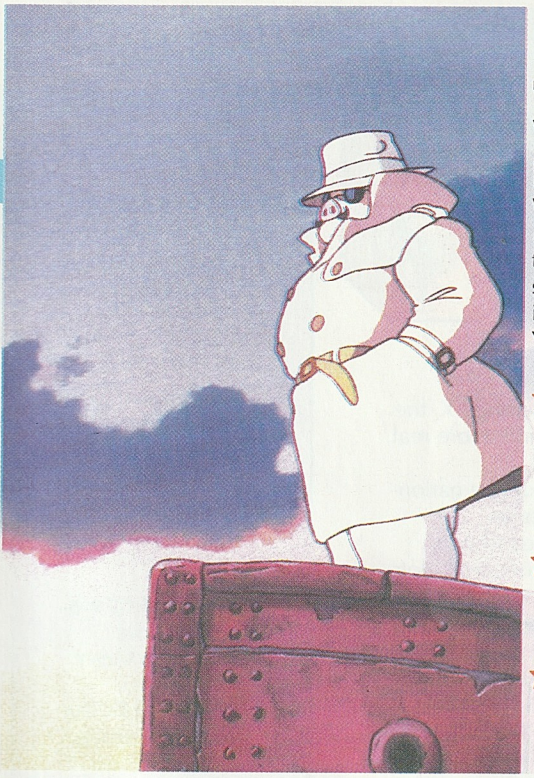

FEATURE ARTICLE

The Whimsy and Wonder of Hayao Miyazaki

With films such as *Nausicaä, Laputa, Totoro, Kiki's Delivery Service* and now *The Crimson Pig* to his credit, is it any wonder many people consider Hayao Miyazaki the best animation creator in the world today? **Takayuki Karahashi** and **Yumiko Yamamoto** explore the Miyazaki mythos

The ANIMERICA Interview

★Hayao Miyazaki

Internationally renowned filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki talks about his love affair with aeronautics, the state of the film industry today, and why the pilot is a pig. By **Takashi Oshiguchi**. FIRST OF A TWO-PART INTERVIEW 4

★Translating Nausicaä

Translator and *shojo* scholar **Matt Thorn** explains why he'd do *Nausicaä* for nada in this special report 10

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Your guidebook and travelogue to the adventurous worlds of anime and manga maestro Hayao Miyazaki. By **Larry Greenfield** 10

MANGA FEATURES

Fifth Chilling Installment in the Horror Masterpiece

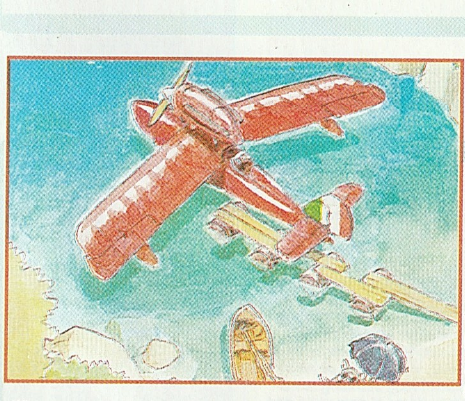
MERMAID FOREST

Yuta, the boy with the taste for immortality, seeks out his roots in this flashback "companion story" set several hundred years in the past. Currently available as a subtitled OAV from U.S. Manga Corps, *Mermaid Forest* is a uniquely macabre tale from **Rumiko Takahashi** and is exclusive to ANIMERICA 19

Sixth Installment in the Dark World of *Bubblegum Crisis*

AD POLICE

It's the G.E.N.O.M. boomers vs. the guard boomers as the taking of ALEX the supercomputer continues! The thrilling continuation of *Bubblegum Crisis* creator Toshimichi Suzuki's popular OAV series of the same name, soon to be subtitled in English by AnimEigo. Another ANIMERICA exclusive by **Tony Takezaki** 39



Special Color Manga Feature!

CRIMSON PIG, "The Age of the Flying Boat"

Return to the thrilling days of yesteryear when men were men and pigs were pilots! First serialized in MODEL GRAPHIX, *Crimson Pig, "The Age of the Flying Boat"* is the inspiration for last summer's blockbuster film and illustrates artist/creator **Hayao Miyazaki**'s lifelong love of flying. Naturally, this first of three installments is exclusive to ANIMERICA 57

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FROM THE EDITOR

Admit It.

It was an ordinary day. It was a rare afternoon at home—during *Donahue* —that I first heard it. "Now playing in theaters near you—*My Neighbor Totoro*, the new classic...."

I couldn't believe it. It's not as though it caught anyone in the anime and manga community by surprise; after all, Tokuma/50th Street Films' English-language release was reported in our April issue. But to someone like me, a card-carrying member of Generation X, the fact that it was broadcast on television (on *Donahue*, for crying out loud!) made it somehow more real. *Totoro* had arrived!

It's a good thing I caught the TV spot firsthand. If I hadn't, Siskel and Ebert's review on the nationally syndicated *At the Movies* would probably have reduced me to anime-induced catatonia.

"Our next film is a genuine discovery, I think; it's an enchanting and special animated film for children named *My Neighbor Totoro* and, unlike most animated films which are about contrived plots and lots of action and explosions and excitement, this one tells an absorbing, even an inspiring story about two little girls who move with their father into an old house at the end of the woods. And one day, one of the girls sees a tiny Totoro, which is a mythical creature which lives in the trees.

"Notice how well-drawn and visualized the animation is there, and how nicely the color works, and look at the quiet, magical way this scene develops.... The very fact that this movie is about two young girls is unusual, I think; boys are usually the heroes of animated features. I liked it not just as a children's film, but for itself; very few films come along that are magical for all ages, and are wholesome and sane and intelligent and entertaining—and *My Neighbor Totoro* is one of them."

Besides firmly establishing himself as the critic of choice for legions of anime fans, what Ebert has done is more than heap praise upon a deserving film. The fact that Siskel felt the film had "got off to a boring start" is irrelevant, because what Ebert has done is bring one of the world's most important animation filmmakers to the attention of the entertainment mainstream.

Certainly, *Totoro* is not the first Japanese-animated film to catch the eye of the mainstream media; *Akira* did that. But as an industry, we've taken a very important step forward. Unlike the days of anime fiefdom in the early '80s, when bootlegged-anime robber barons sat atop piles of tapes like heaps of gold, the '90s look to be the age of forty acres and a mule, when anyone with a little initiative and a few connections can claim a homestead on the rapidly expanding anime frontier.

We've got over half a dozen companies retailing English-language anime in the U.S. right now. New companies are forming seemingly overnight. With the entrance of distributors such as Troma's 50th Street Films into the picture, can the days of a *Crimson Pig* in every Blockbuster be far behind?

Streamline Pictures, which first dubbed *Totoro* a few years back, has taken a lot of flak from anime fans over the years. One of the more recent tempests in a teapot seems to center on a comment Streamline president Carl Macek allegedly made at a convention panel last year concerning the role the zeitgeist of U.S. anime fandom holds over how he runs his company. (Go figure.)

Kudos to Streamline for keeping their eye on the prize all these years despite some incredible odds. On behalf of anime fans everywhere, let me say this:

Streamline, you done good.

Trish Ledoux

Trish Ledoux
Editor

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Contributors

Journalistic kudos notwithstanding, interviewer **Takashi Oshiguchi** *was one of your Editor's first friends when she lived in Japan and she just loves the* Space Pirate Captain Harlock *book he gave her for her birthday. Oshiguchi can currently be found in Manga no Mori's new Shibuya branch, which by all accounts is only slightly larger than Shinjuku's two-dimensional store (how many otaku can dance on the head of a pin?).*

Larry Greenfield *("Greenfield's Guide to Miyazaki") has been a fan of Japanese animation since he first saw* Laputa *back in 1988. Known over the years for his prolific postings over the modem-waves (lgreenf@caticsuf.csufresno.edu), Larry was one of many elves who toiled on "BayScape 2042," the opening animation for Anime Expo '92. In real life, Larry is a graduate of Julliard on the violin currently shilling for work.*

Hunky hipster and "AV Interface" columnist **James Teal** *is quite possibly the coolest man in anime (even* Five Star Stories *creator Mamoru Nagano once described him as "beautiful"). James is a longtime contributor to* ANIMAG*, where he met and put a vicious wrestling move called "The Claw" on your Editor over half a decade ago. James currently voyages on the* U.S.S. Independence *in his quest for arcane* Gundam *lore.*

Yumiko Yamamoto*, who contributed to this month's Anime Feature, says she selected this "Laura Palmer"-style photo in tribute to her sybaritic, wastrel youth. Known primarily for her work on* ANIMAG*, Yumiko is a paronomasiac of long standing, a frequent sufferer of aprosexia and, after the insanity of the convention season, a strong believer in the anime auto-da-fé. (Look 'em up, kids. You've got dictionaries.)*

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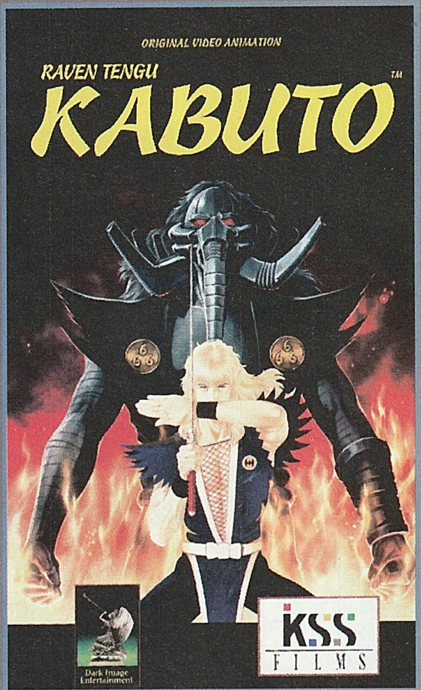

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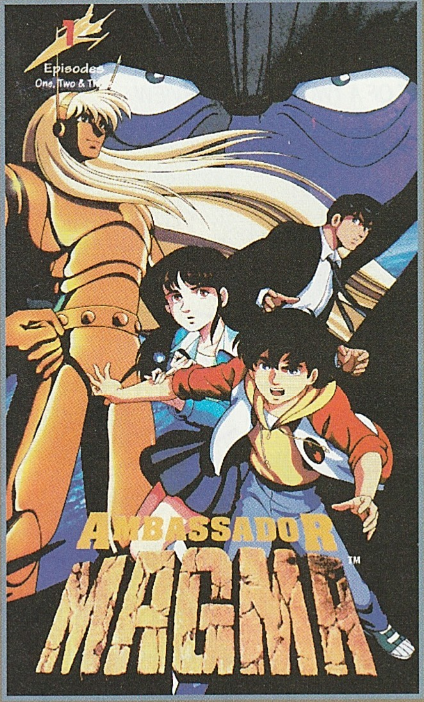

DIE-01

DIE-02

RAVEN TENGU KABUTO

RAVEN TENGU KABUTO
Raven Tengu, Kabuto is the story of the mystic samurai Kabuto. He travels to a village which has just fallen under the spell of the evil sorceress, Tamamushi. Aided by his mystic sword, "Hiryu," Kabuto must save his former love, the princess Ran, before she falls victim to Tamamushi's evil curse.

A fast past-paced and sexy fusion of traditional Japanese mythology and cyberpunk action, from Buichi Terasawa (Creator of SPACE COBRA and MIDNIGHT EYE, GOKU).

AMBASSADOR MAGMA

Ambassador Magma is a golden human rocket created to defend the planet Earth. Goa, an old foe that Magma had defeated, has awakened from dormancy and attempts to capture the planet Earth again. To keep Earth safe from the hands of Goa, Magma has been reawakened to watch over the planet.
Episode one, "My Name is Goa." Fumiaki Asuka and his daughter Miki are keepers of Goa and Ambassador Magma's spirits. After Fumiaki is captured by aliens and releases Goa's spirit, Miki is pursued and finds protection in Atsushi Murakami's house. She discovers the true purpose of her life and must decide what to do.
Episode two, "The Gold Giant." Goa's attempt to capture Miki fails and Ambassador Magma returns to Earth. However, this does not stop Goa's plan for conquest and he sends humanoid creatures to quietly begin his plan. Mamoru meets with the protector of the Earth and gains insight into Goa and Magma.
Episode three, "Silent Invasion." As Atsushi and Junya try to uncover evidence of Goa's existence, a mysterious stranger appears. Mamoru and Tomoko are attacked by a savage canine and must fight to stay alive.

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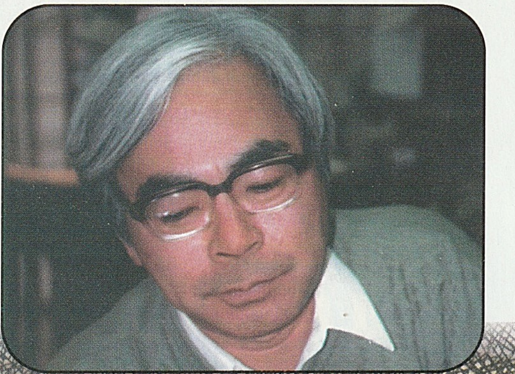
Exclusive! The ANIMERICA Interview

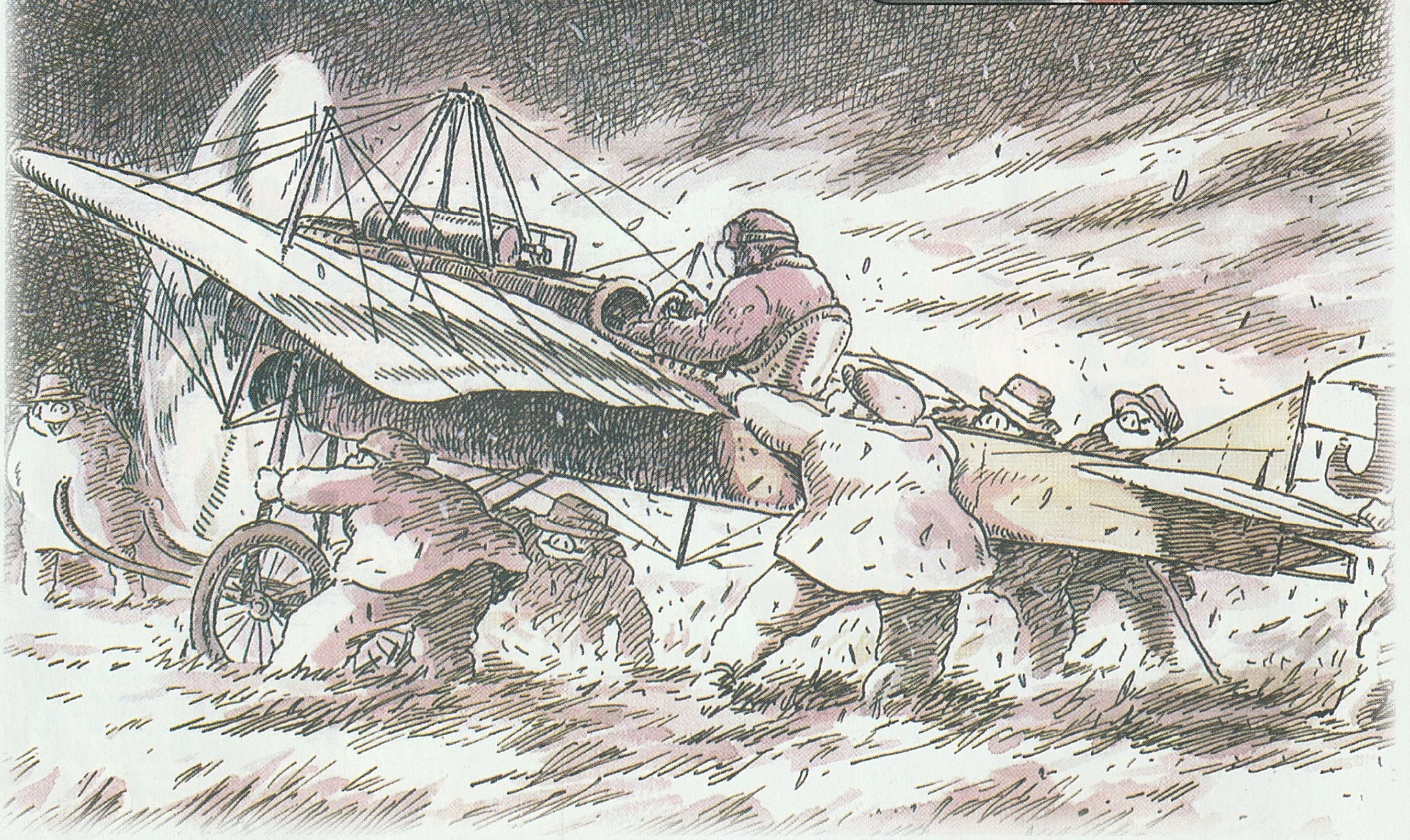
The Whimsy and Wonder of Hayao Miyazaki

In this refreshingly candid interview, the internationally renowned filmmaker talks about his love affair with aeronautics, the state of the film industry today, and why the pilot is a pig.

*Interview by **Takashi Oshiguchi**, translated by **Takayuki Karahashi** and **Matt Thorn**.*

FIRST OF A TWO-PART INTERVIEW





With this summer's release of an English-dubbed *My Neighbor Totoro* in theaters across the U.S. by 50th Street Films, many American audiences will experience for the first time the animated magic which has made Miyazaki a household name in Japan.

It's about time.

Born in 1941 in Tokyo, Miyazaki was graduated from Gakushuin University (the school that the members of the Japanese imperial family attend) and began his career as a filmmaker doing in-between work at Toei Animation in 1963. Never content to observe the status quo, one of the first things Miyazaki did after entering Toei was to march in front of the building in union demonstrations.

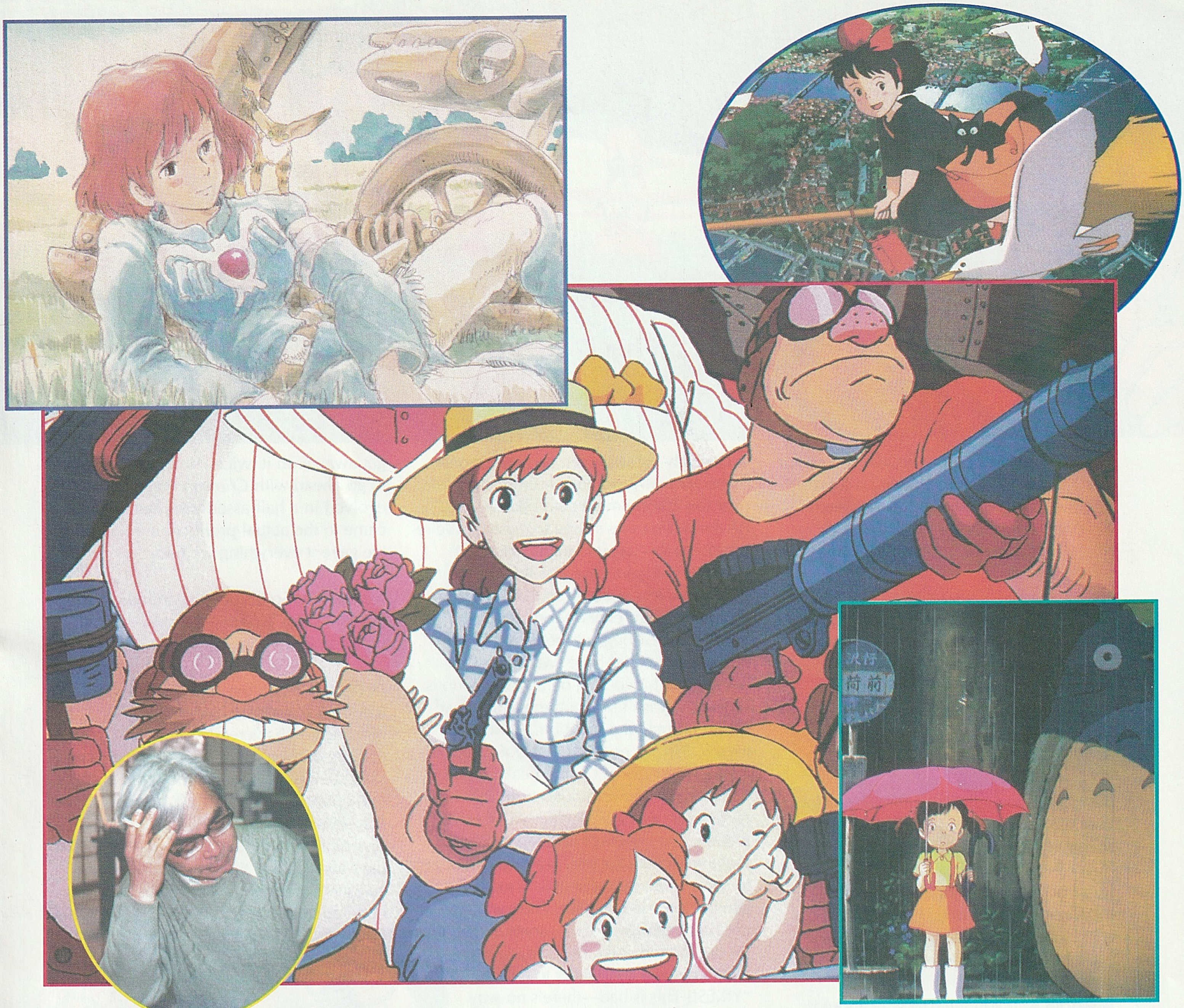
By as early as 1964, Miyazaki had been elected president of the studio's animation labor union and had begun wooing his future wife, whom he married in 1965. It wasn't long before Miyazaki was squaring off against the director of Toei's latest film project, *Gulliver's Space Travels* (1965), insisting that the ending was unsatisfactory and needed to be changed (Miyazaki won). Even as a mere in-betweener, Miyazaki was proving that he had the persistence of vision which would eventually make him one of the world's leading creators of animation.

Although his first production as a solo director didn't take place until *Future Boy Conan* (1978), Miyazaki had long been involved in the creative process, all the way back to the thousands of illustrations he drew for *The Adventures of Horus, Prince of the Sun* (1968). Other notable involvements from this early period include *Animal Treasure Island* (1971), a real "cartoon" adventure; *Lupin III* (1971), a 26-episode TV series not to be confused with the later 155-episode series; *Panda, Panda Cub* (1973), a feature which strongly foreshadows the later *Totoro*.

In the early 1980s, Miyazaki began to move away from comedy to make animation which would appeal to a more mature audience such as *Lupin III: Castle Cagliostro* (1980) and the six episodes he directed of *Sherlock Holmes* (1982). It wouldn't be until *Animage*'s publication of *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind* in 1982, however, that Miyazaki would achieve a reputation as a serious filmmaker.

"I started drawing the manga only because I was unemployed as an animator, so I'll stop drawing it as soon as I find animation work," Miyazaki once said in an interview. The story of a spirited warrior-princess coming of age in a future world wracked by ecological disaster, *Nausicaä* is one of the few manga that Japanese cognoscenti will admit to reading. Its popularity is such that the frequent hiatuses Miyazaki is obliged to take when he goes back to the animation studio cause a minor furor amidst fans of the series worldwide.

According to *The Art of Nausicaä*, *Animage* convinced Miyazaki to draw a manga for them with the specific promise that it wouldn't be used as the basis for some future animation project. It was *Animage* who first broke the covenant when they approached Miyazaki about making a short, fifteen-minute *Nausicaä* film. Miyazaki declined the *Nausicaä* short but offered instead to work on a sixty-minute original animation video. When Tokuma (publisher of *Animage*) promptly came back with an offer to sponsor a full-length theatrical feature, the *Nausicaä* film was born and Miyazaki was firmly ensconced as a filmmaker to be reckoned with.



Since then, Miyazaki's schedule has included a new movie every other year (*Laputa, Castle in the Sky* in 1986; *My Neighbor Totoro* in 1988; *Kiki's Delivery Service* in 1989; and *The Crimson Pig* in 1992), not to mention drawing *Nausicaä*. The fact that *Nausicaä* will end with the seventh volume in the series (the sixth volume is scheduled for publication in Japan this fall, with an English version coming from Viz Comics in spring of '94) isn't so much a tragedy as the natural end of an era; after all, there are new projects waiting in the wings, such as a *Crimson Pig* sequel set during the Spanish Civil War for which Miyazaki says he's already written the story.

"I don't want to spend the little time I've got left just for the benefit of young people who only like my lighter side," Miyazaki said in a 1989 *Comic Box* interview. "I'd rather use my remaining energy as a filmmaker in a way which will be satisfying to me, and to the people around me.

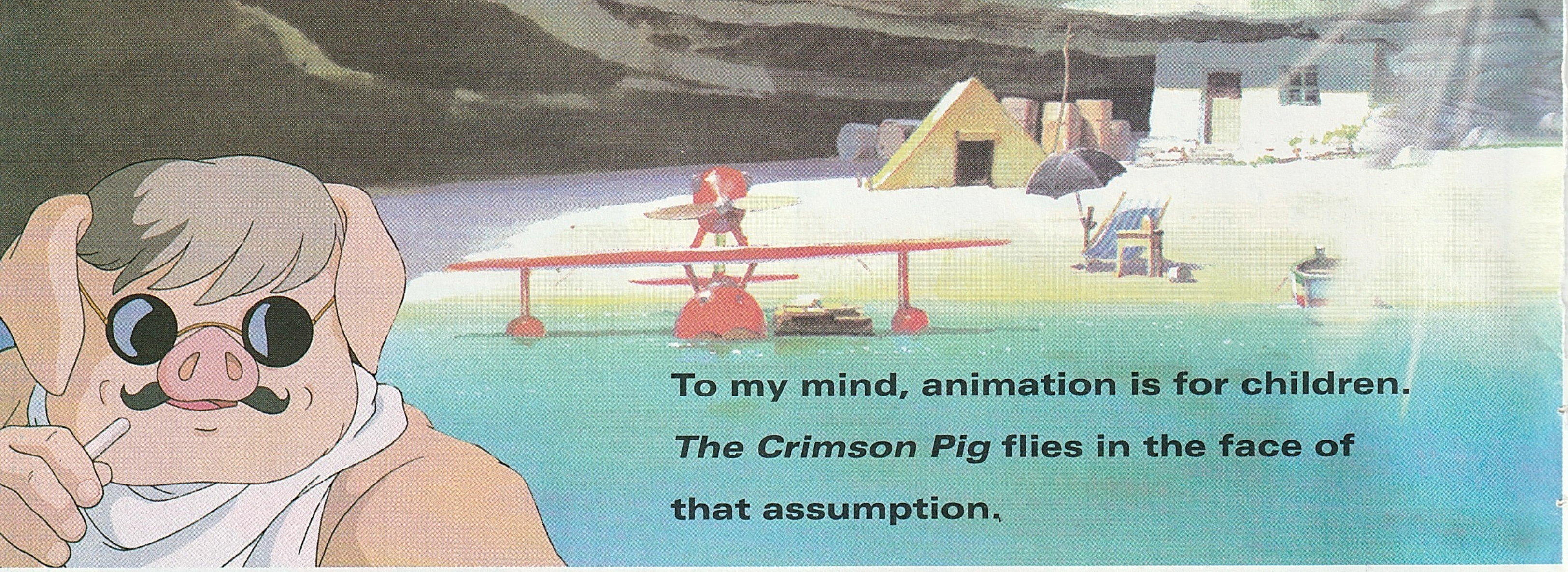
"The most important thing that Japanese animation should *not* do is to categorize the fans as a certain kind of people and then make movies only for them. How can we make films which will gain the acceptance of those people who've never seen animation before? We need to get nearer to that universal appeal of animation when making a movie, or all our efforts will have been for nothing."

Until *Totoro*, *Warriors of the Wind* (a massively re-edited and dubbed *Nausicaä* with about thirty minutes missing, the editing of which Miyazaki himself has allegedly decried as "despicable") was the only Miyazaki animation many Americans had been exposed to. (*Laputa*, which was also dubbed into English, saw only limited "art house" release and did little toward furthering Miyazaki's fame in the U.S.) It's ironic that a film many anime fans describe in the harshest possible terms could possibly have been made by the same animator who created *Totoro*, a film *At the Movies*' Roger Ebert called "magical for all ages…wholesome, sane, intelligent and entertaining." One needn't compare *Warriors of the Wind* to *Totoro* to realize that Miyazaki's English-dubbed works occupy wildly different ends of the cinematic spectrum.

In this very special ANIMERICA issue, we're pleased to present the first of two parts in our exclusive interview with Hayao Miyazaki by special correspondent **Takashi Oshiguchi**; "Greenfield's Guide to Miyazaki," your guidebook and travelogue to the adventurous worlds of the anime maestro by Miyazaki aficionado and classically trained violinist **Larry Greenfield**; translator and *shojo* scholar **Matt Thorn** tells why he'd do *Nausicaä* for nada in a special report; plus our very special color manga feature, *Crimson Pig, "The Age of the Flying Boat,"* the basis for last year's blockbuster film.

It was the best of dubs, it was the worst of dubs…. When it comes to the treatment his work has received at the hands of foreign distributors, Charles Dickens may very well have been talking about Hayao Miyazaki. Miyazaki is an icon in his native Japan, but only recently has he begun to earn the international recognition he deserves. In many ways, the rest of the world has yet to truly experience the whimsy and wonder of Hayao Miyazaki.

—Takayuki Karahashi and Yumiko Yamamoto



To my mind, animation is for children. *The Crimson Pig* flies in the face of that assumption.

ANIMERICA: First I'd like to ask you about *The Crimson Pig*. It's received a lot of attention due to the fact that it's been the biggest money-maker of all your films. How do you feel about its box-office success?

MIYAZAKI: It was an unexpected hit. I was telling everyone, "This one's not going to go well, so don't get your hopes up." No one was more surprised than I was when the film was a financial success.

ANIMERICA: Why is that?

MIYAZAKI: To my mind, animation is for children. *The Crimson Pig* flies in the face of that assumption. Moreover, as a producer I still think *The Crimson Pig* is too idiosyncratic a film for a toddlers-to-old-folks general audience. That it turned out to be a hit was an unexpected stroke of luck. It's actually kind of disturbing.

ANIMERICA: If you felt that way about it, why did you undertake the project in the first place?

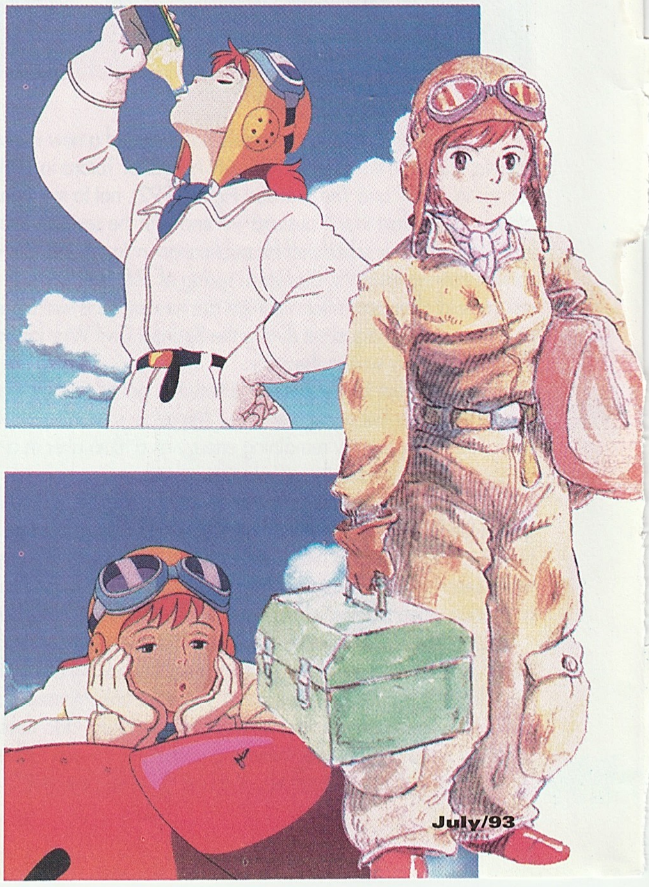
MIYAZAKI: The biggest reason lies in Miyazaki's personality [LAUGHS]. The dangerous thing about him, particularly in terms of business, is that every once in a while he feels a sudden urge to stand everything he's ever done on its head. I've very earnestly made a number of films for children, such as *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Kiki's Delivery Service* and, as a producer, *Falling Tears of Remembrance* [*"Omohide Poro Poro" in Japanese—Ed.*]. After that frustration began to build. Somewhere in the back of my mind this idea started to take root that animation should be more fun, more absurd, and I just couldn't control this feeling. It was precisely at such a dangerous moment [LAUGHS] that, for a variety of reasons, we found ourselves committed to making a 45-minute film exclusively for screening on international flights. Actually, no one was more at a loss over this commitment than I [LAUGHS]. All the while I was saying to myself, "We're just doing this just for laughs," but as it turns out everyone else was thinking of it as a new movie—so much so that I had to start taking their expectations seriously. What's more, I began to realize that the staff—who I could have sworn was thoroughly sick of working on all these serious projects—wasn't sick of them at all. I had totally misread the situation. I thought to myself, "This is no good. I've got to get my act together." So as I'm frantically trying to catch up, forty-five minutes turns into ninety minutes, we have trouble with the animation, and expenses begin to mount to the point where the only way we can hope to recover our investment is to make it a general theatrical release. Then one day our producer, Mr. Suzuki, announces his decision to make this into a full-fledged movie and I think to myself, "YIKES!! This is bad—there's no *way* this is going to be a hit!!" [LAUGHS] I was really worried.

ANIMERICA: As far back as a year ago, way before the film was released, I heard people talking about how the film had all the elements of success. It had a retro theme, it was animated, and Miyazaki was involved with it.

MIYAZAKI: Well, I never trust the response of industry people [LAUGHS]. They're too conservative. They've always been a step behind the times. If industry people knew what they were talking about, the movie business wouldn't be on the decline like it is [LAUGHS]. Moviegoers aren't fools. You might get lucky and score a hit with a film that has no substance, but you won't get away with it twice. Now, the decision to go ahead with *Crimson Pig* may have evolved in a half-assed way, but when it came to the actual production of the film, we gave it everything we had.

ANIMERICA: So it's not just anime but the Japanese film industry in general that's pretty rough?

MIYAZAKI: If this business was easy, it would be a sin. It doesn't bother me that it's rough. What's really rough, though, is that the damage from a single failure can be fatal. People become too timid and end up making boring stuff. It seems to me that things have gotten rough in the American film industry as well. In the old days all they had to do was make love-conquers-all-type movies. I don't know how much the people in Hollywood actu-



ally believed in love personally…they were probably more concerned with getting a home in Beverly Hills. But at one time that illusion held sway throughout the world. It doesn't anymore. It's become difficult to even pretend you believe in that anymore. Or rather, it might be more accurate to say that movies today are about the psychopathology surrounding love. And these days they seem obliged to overdo everything. The goal now is to throw a huge amount of money at a project, do a huge promotion, and mobilize a huge number of viewers. But don't you think most of the best movies are those which were the end result of small productions? When you watch *Ben Hur* these days it's so ridiculous it's embarrassing. But weren't *My Darling Clementine*, *The Third Man* and *Casablanca* small productions? And they're still excellent films. So it would be wrong to complain that it's particularly hard in Japan. Filmmakers throughout the world are dealing with difficult issues peculiar to their own societies. One thing that can be said with certainty about Japan is that people want to see quality films. The need is there. And the money is there. I think that in order to meet that demand we need new talent.

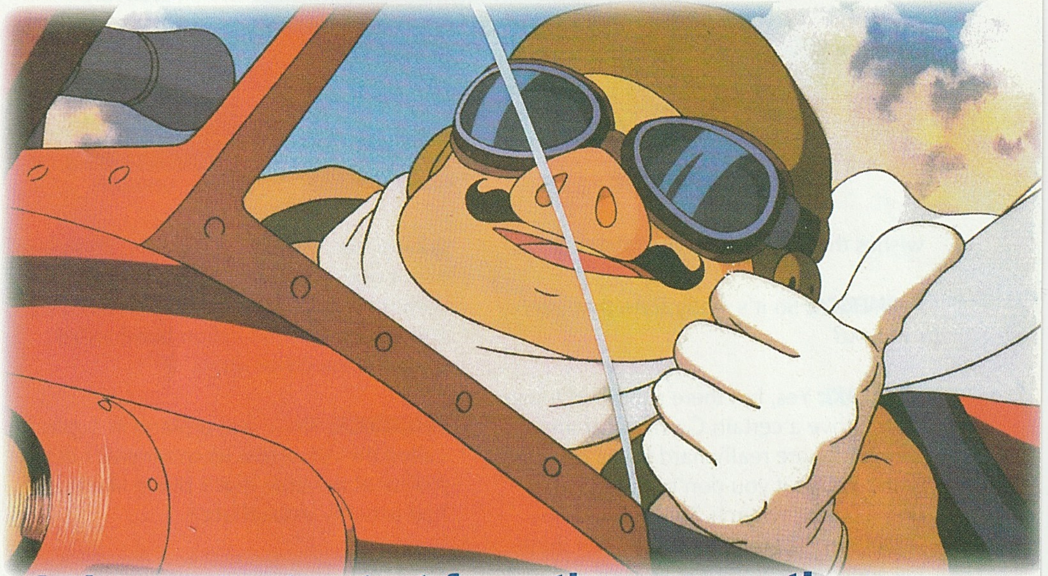
ANIMERICA: The question everyone is asking is, "Why did you make the hero a pig?"

MIYAZAKI: It's because I wouldn't want to draw a character like that as a human being [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: I've been reading *Model Graphix* since the serial began. When *Crimson Pig* first showed up, I thought that it would make for some interesting animation.

MIYAZAKI: Pigs are creatures which might be loved but they are never respected. They're synonymous with greed, obesity, debauchery. The word "pig" itself is used as an insult. I'm not an agnostic or anything, but I don't like a society that parades its righteousness. The righteousness of the U.S., the righteousness of Islam, the righteousness of China, the righteousness of this or that ethnic group, the righteousness of Greenpeace, the righteousness of the entrepreneur.… They all claim to be righteous but they all try to coerce others into complying with their own standards. They restrain others through huge military power, economic power, political power or public opinions. I myself have a number of things I believe are right. And some things make me angry. Actually, I'm a person who gets angry a lot more easily than most people, but I always try to start from the assumption that human beings are foolish. I'm disgusted by the notion that man is the ultimate being, chosen by God. But I believe there are things in this world that are beautiful, that are important, that are worth striving for. I made the hero a pig because that was what best suited these feelings of mine.

ANIMERICA: About mecha. Have you liked that sort of thing since you were a child?



I always try to start from the assumption that human beings are foolish. I'm disgusted by the notion that man is the ultimate being, chosen by God.

MIYAZAKI: Hmm. It wasn't mecha so much as drawing tanks and warships that I liked. I was a shy boy who wasn't very good at expressing himself. I think such children find ways like that to express their yearning for power and strength. I suppose nowadays that takes the form of air guns, video games, remote-controlled craft and the like. Motorbikes, too, are often used that way. But as we grow to adulthood the core of that interest shifts accordingly. At first it's the capabilities and forms of the machines that fascinate us, but in my case my interest shifted to the dramas of the people who build them and who are made to use them.

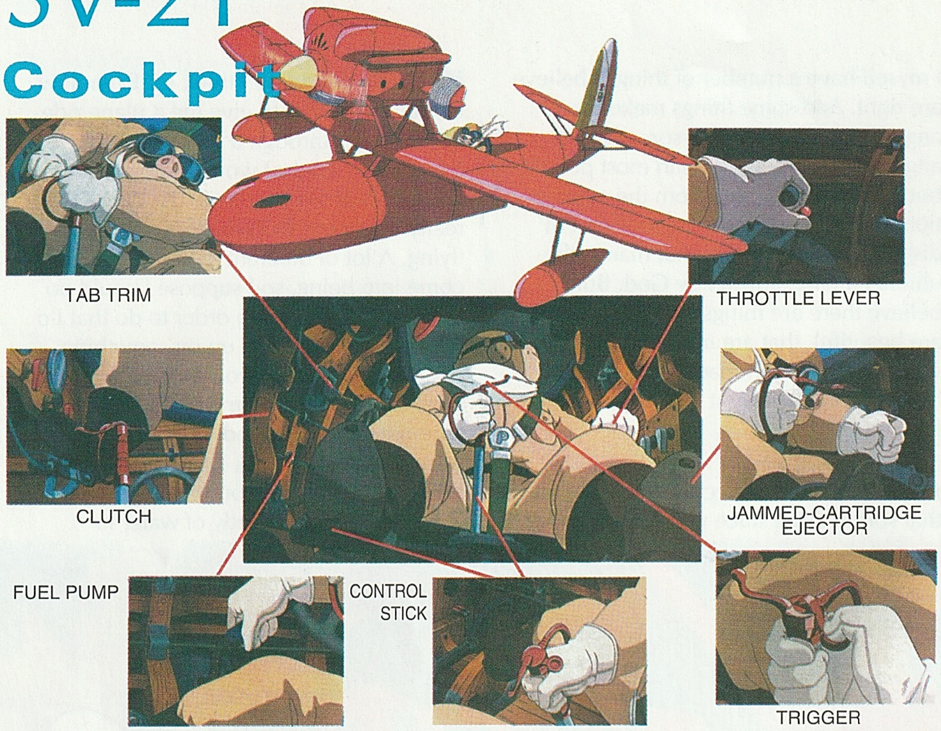
ANIMERICA: Did you ever want to become a pilot?

MIYAZAKI: No, I don't think so. Even now if you were going to give me a plane ride I'd like to fly through a sky with some interesting clouds. I would enjoy seeing what kind of view there is, but I'm not really interested in flying for the sake of flying. A lot of different flying sports have come into being, so I suppose I could do it if I wanted to, but in order to do that I'd probably have to give up on something else. For example, I wouldn't want to have to cut back on time spent relaxing in a mountain cabin or pouring all my energy into creating a film. I'd like to have a seaplane, but there wouldn't be any point without a beautiful body of water to maneuver on and a place to hideout in. And most of all I would need a society where one could fly and land as one pleased. I'd be in trouble if I were forced into speaking with an air traffic controller in English. English is not my forte, after all [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: A friend of mine whose pilot father had seen your movies and read your manga wondered if you'd done a lot of research on technical matters.

MIYAZAKI: No, numbers aren't my forte either, so I don't read complicated books. Besides, I don't really like any airplanes that've been made since the Douglass DC-3 [LAUGHS]. I'll fly in a jet airliner if I have to, but I'm the kind of person who

SV-21 Cockpit



wishes they made jets with tatami floors.

ANIMERICA: So it's really form that interests you?

MIYAZAKI: Yes, but there's more to it than that. I drive a certain German car and the wheel lugs are really hard to get off. They won't budge if you don't jump up and down on the wrench. When I'm doing something like that I'll find myself thinking something along the lines of, "Man, I bet it must have been hard getting the lugs off the wheels of one of those heavy German tanks. It would be really awful if, to top it all off, there was sleet falling and you were knee-deep in mud and shells started exploding all around you." This sort of fantasy will be running through my head as I'm taking the tire off. There was a triple-engine plane in Italy called the Savoia-Marchetti S.M. 79[1] that I just happened to get a good diagram of. So I'm trying to recreate in my mind what the interior space of that plane must have been like. If I went to Italy I could see the actual airplane in a museum, but I'd much rather piece together the interior of the plane in my mind than go and see the real thing. It's something like philology.... It's strange, I know. But if I were to see the real thing I'd lose my motivation [LAUGHS]. There was this diagram of a handle I didn't know the purpose of, so I thought about it and thought about it until finally I figured out that it must have been used to pull a metal cover over the glass gondola in the belly of the S.M. 79 to protect it during landing. I was really thrilled with myself for figuring it out [LAUGHS]. I can just picture the Italian bombardier dragging the cover up.

ANIMERICA: There was a plane in *Lupin III* called the *Albatross*, wasn't there? I didn't realize at the time that a plane like that had actually existed once.

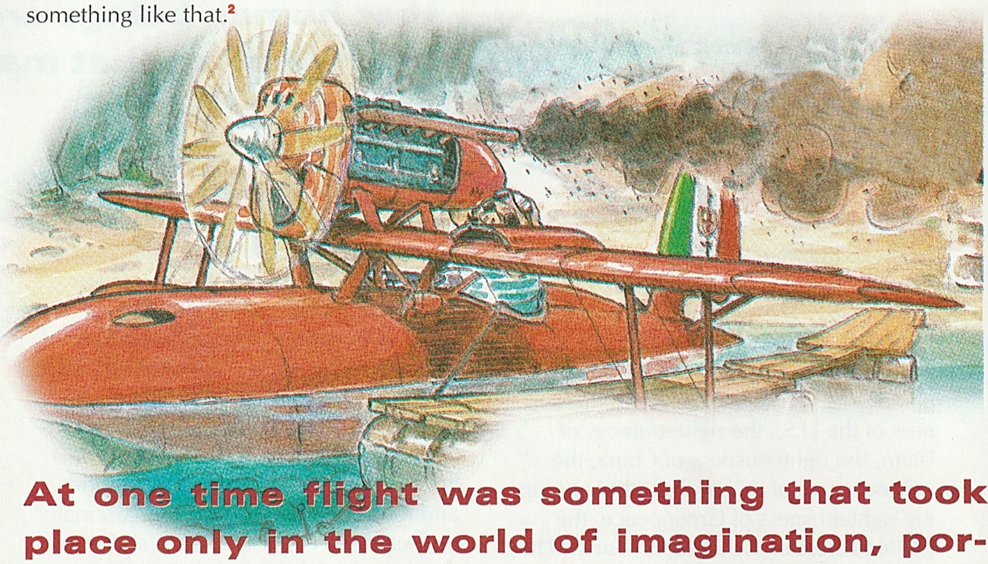
MIYAZAKI: There was something like that, yes. I believe it was the "Dornier Do X" or something like that.[2]

ANIMERICA: When you see a plane like that in a black and white film, it looks even bigger, don't you think?

MIYAZAKI: They do look bigger. As if something that shouldn't be able to fly at all is flying magnificently. I prefer the planes from that period, from the '20s through the early '30s.

ANIMERICA: When illustrators in the early 1900s drew planes of the future, it wasn't jets they drew but just a lot more propellers. I guess your own work is an extension of that.

MIYAZAKI: Those images really are interesting, even today. *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* is still interesting when you read it today, don't you think? Later, when submarines were actually built, the bottom of the sea was portrayed countless times but none of those images were particularly interesting. What makes *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* so interesting even today is that the sea depicted there isn't just any sea—it's a sea of the mind. At one time flight, too, was something that took place only in the world of imagination. It was portrayed with the sense that, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be set free and fly through the sky?" Now it's strictly a matter of physics. I think it must have been different back then.



> **At one time flight was something that took place only in the world of imagination, portrayed with the sense that, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to be set free and fly through the sky?" Now it's strictly a matter of physics.**

I want to create enjoyment for Japanese children. If the children of other continents or islands enjoy my work as well, then to me that's just icing on the cake.

ANIMERICA: Even with all those propellers there's no way those things could have flown.

MIYAZAKI: No, they couldn't. But to children those images makes more sense. Children aren't interested in logic; to them it's pure imagination.

ANIMERICA: *The Crimson Pig* seems to be set in the 1930s.

MIYAZAKI: I'd wanted to do it somewhere around 1928, but the world depression hadn't begun at that time, and it still hadn't reached Italy by 1929, so it ended up taking place in 1930. We sort of fudged on the dates.

ANIMERICA: There were still biplanes at that time.

MIYAZAKI: Yes, there were a lot of biplanes in use. It's not that I have a particular love of biplanes, but that I have a love of technology which no longer exists. We can't go back and witness it, and there's something stirring about that impossibility, don't you think? That's what it is. That's what make the past so stirring…the fact that you can never return to it. The fact that it can never be recovered. The period when the airplane seemed most significant, a period that can never be recovered, is the 1920s and 1930s. The airplanes from the true dawn of aviation, the 1910s, are so rickety they just aren't interesting. But the skies of World War I were so cruel and tragic it's just too painful to portray them. When you get to the late '30s you're in the world of the DC-3 and the direction aviation is taking is already carved in stone. And that's why they're boring.

ANIMERICA: What do you think of the animation industry today? Do you think it's heading in a good direction or a bad one?

MIYAZAKI: There's no denying we're in a boring period. There just isn't very much interesting stuff coming out. We're getting too many films whose budget limitations are making their seams show, so to speak, and not enough stimulating works. But the biggest problem is that we're not seeing any new talent emerge.

ANIMERICA: Does that go for television, too?

MIYAZAKI: Yes. But looked at another way, a boring period can be seen as a time for building up the energy needed for the next leap; a time for staffers to build up frustration. It's the compression needed for an explosion. But it's also possible that we could just go on compressing and sputter out.

ANIMERICA: What do you think about new technologies such as computer graphics?

MIYAZAKI: I don't think it's particularly useful in terms of labor-saving. It's a new form of expression, yes, but my sense is that the introduction of computer graphics has become a sort of competition with video games. If that's the case, well, video games will win. People who want to use computer graphics should use them, but personally I'm not interested.

ANIMERICA: Have you ever considered making a live-action film?

MIYAZAKI: I'm always bemoaning the fact that I haven't got enough energy even for animation. I wonder if I could possibly succeed in another genre.

ANIMERICA: The only work of yours that's appeared in the U.S. is a modified version of *Nausicaä*, and yet your name has become very well established. I believe you once commented that your work wouldn't be understood outside of Japan.

MIYAZAKI: What I meant was that I discovered that my work was a product of a Japanese historical perspective and sense of nature, much more so than I myself had originally thought. I think popular culture tends to be conservative. So I have no plans to start making films with a global market in mind. I want to create enjoyment for Japanese children. If the children of other continents or islands enjoy my work as well, then to me that's just icing on the cake.

ANIMERICA: But the fact is, you already have many fans in other countries.

MIYAZAKI: I'm grateful for that. But Japan will always remain very much the foundation of my work.

ANIMERICA: Is there anything else you would like to say to Miyazaki fans overseas?

MIYAZAKI: My next film should be more interesting than anything I've made so far. I hope you'll look forward to it. ✩

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[1] The Savoia-Marchetti S.M. 79 Sparviero, "by far the most important Italian bomber of World War II, this tough three-engined aircraft established a reputation that contrasted with most Italian weapons of the day…it was flown with courage and skill." [*Jane's Encyclopedia of Aviation*, pg. 792, © Bestseller Publications Ltd., London, 1989]

[2] The Dornier Do X, a Swiss-built craft which "first flew 25 July 1929. It was then by far the largest flying-boat in the world and remained so until World War II: on 21 October 1929 it lifted 150 passengers, a crew of 10 and 9 stowaways. But engine troubles caused considerable problems and the original 12 Siemens-built Bristol Jupiter radials were replaced by 12 Curtiss Conquerors." [*Jane's*, pg. 328]

ANIMERICA Behind the Scenes

Translating Nausicaä

*Translator and shojo manga scholar **Matt Thorn** ("Extreme Close-Up") explains why he'd translate* Nausicaä *for nada in this special report.*

A good translation requires the translator to be at once passionately involved in and coolly distanced from the work at hand. In the case of Hayao Miyazaki's *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind*, however, I confess that any semblance of professional objectivity went out the window. I would have translated *Nausicaä* for free. I would have *paid* to do it. (Disclaimer to Viz in anticipation of future episodes—I didn't mean that.)

Back in 1986, when I was first getting into manga, a friend invited me over to watch an animated movie. Until then, the only anime I had seen was the rock-'em-sock-'em stuff on Japanese TV, which didn't appeal to my highbrow tastes at the time (I've lightened up a bit since—but only a bit). *Nausicaä*, then, was my first exposure to first-rate, feature-length anime. I was engrossed throughout and sat stunned when it was over. My friend, a sociology professor at a Japanese university, and I sat up for hours raving about the film and analyzing every aspect of its form and content. I've been a Miyazaki fan ever since.

Needless to say, I leapt at the opportunity to translate *Part Three* of Viz's adaptation (Volume Five of the Japanese softcover edition) with the same verve Japanese politicians reserve for illegal contributions. It proved to be even more challenging—and satisfying—than I had expected. Those who have read the original Japanese know that Miyazaki masterfully blends archaic and contemporary speech, with one eye to the past and the other to the future.

To pull this off smoothly was as difficult in English as it must have been for Miyazaki in Japanese. On top of this, I had to maintain continuity with Studio Proteus' excellent adaptation of *Part One* and *Two*, at the same time adjusting the tone to fit my own style and interpretation of the work, which were inevitably somewhat different. But the ultimate goal of the translator is to make the reader forget s/he is reading a translation, so if you were conscious of any of this while reading *Part Three*, either you're a fellow over-sensitized translator or I didn't do a good enough job.

Like everyone else, I'm eagerly awaiting Volume Six so that I can continue with the translation, but Miyazaki always edits *Nausicaä* extensively between serialization in ANIMAGE and final softcover publication. In the meantime, I have *The Crimson Pig, "The Age of the Flying Boat"* to keep me busy looking up obscure aviation lore in the library. Hope you enjoy it!

ANIMERICA Special Feature

Greenfield's Guide to Miyazaki

*Your guidebook and travelogue to the adventurous worlds of Hayao Miyazaki. By **Larry Greenfield***

Lupin III: Cagliostro's Castle

Co-Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Tetsuo Katayama • Production by Tokyo Movie Shinsha • Released thru Toho, 1979 • 100 minutes

Miyazaki's feature-length directorial debut, based on the popular *Lupin III* manga by Monkey Punch (later animated as two TV series). Comedic adventures of the alleged grandson of the famous "gentleman thief" from the French novel series. Miyazaki co-wrote the film and later went on to direct two episodes of the *Lupin III* TV series ("Albatross, Wings of Death" and "Farewell Lovely Lupin") under a pseudonym.

Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind

Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Isao Takahata • Production by Topcraft • Released thru Tokuma Shoten, 1984 • 116 Minutes

Based on the manga published intermittently since 1982 in ANIMAGE magazine. Details a future world facing ecological disaster, man's relationship with nature and the coming of age of a spirited warrior-princess. Continually voted by Japanese audiences as their favorite anime of all time, *Nausicaä* also carries the seal of the World Wildlife Federation for its environmental message.

Laputa, Castle in the Sky

Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Isao Takahata • Production by Studio Ghibli • Released thruTokuma Shoten, 1986 • 124 Minutes

Two young orphans search for a legendary floating island in the sky, based on a setting described in the classic satire *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. Over a year in production, Miyazaki personally handled much of the momentous project, everything from clean-up to cel production to writing the lyrics of the closing song. Highest-grossing animated film ever released in Hong Kong.

My Neighbor Totoro

Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Toru Hara • Production by Studio Ghibli • Released thru Tokuma Shoten, 1988 • 86 Minutes

The joy and wonderment of nature as seen through the eyes of childhood. Two sisters, new residents to the countryside, unexpectedly meet an amiable spirit of nature—Totoro. Longtime friend and collaborator Isao Takahata's feature *Grave of the Fireflies* played as a double-feature with *Totoro* for its premiere—the date was affectionately referred to as "Super Saturday." Once again, Miyazaki wrote the lyrics for the closing song. English dub by Streamline Pictures opened this May in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York to largely rave reviews; may play in other markets depending on box office.

Kiki's Delivery Service

Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Hayao Miyazaki • Production by Studio Ghibli • Released thru Tokuma Shoten, 1989 • 102 Minutes

Thirteen-year old witch ventures out to find her independence in the big city, based on the award-winning children's book by Eiko Kadono. The film's unspecified European city is said to have been modeled loosely after Stockholm, Sweden. Package delivery company Yamato Transport served as a sponsor for the film after a brief trademark dispute. Top-grossing domestic film of 1989.

The Crimson Pig

Written and Directed by Hayao Miyazaki • Produced by Toshio Suzuki • Production by Studio Ghibli • Released thru Tokuma Shoten, 1992 • 93 Minutes

Story of a heroic, middle-aged aviator pig and his fight for love and honor in Italy of the early 1930s. Based on an original comic written for *Model Grafix*, and a personal project for Miyazaki, the film pays homage to the dawn of modern aviation. True to the theme of flight, Japan Airlines was a major sponsor and premiered the film aboard international Japan Airlines flights before its debut in theaters. Top-grossing domestic film of 1992.

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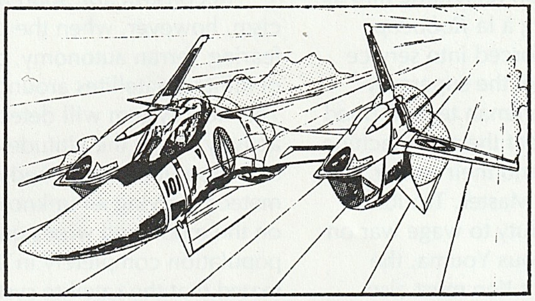

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TV35-02	*1/35*	*Scope Dog*	*$ 9.60*	*20 pcs*
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TV35-04	*1/35*	*ST-Tortoise*	*$ 9.60*	*10 pcs*
TV35-05	*1/35*	*Marshy Dog*	*$ 9.60*	*many*
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RE-001	*1/72*	*Macross VF-4 Vinyl Kit*	*$64.00*	*10 pcs*
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Shipping Charge Chart

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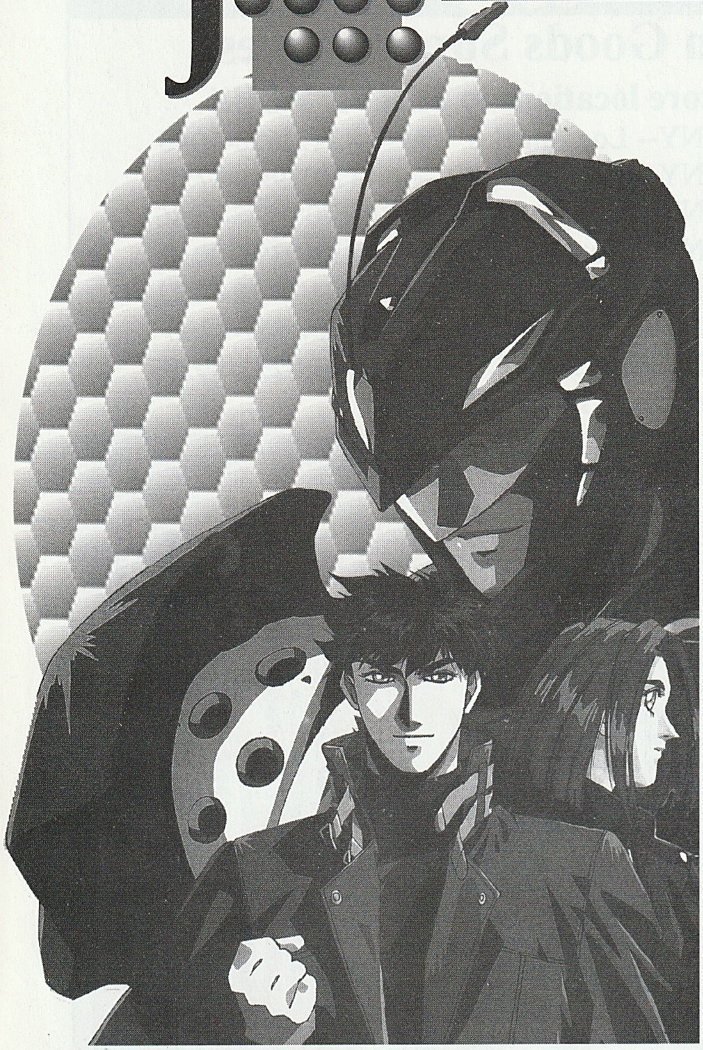
What's new? What's hot? And where can I see it? In this section, ANIMERICA *brings you the best of the current releases and the latest news straight from the Japanese anime industry.*



Hey Hey, It's the Borgman!

That daring demon-fighting trio of schoolteachers by day, demon-hunters by night is back in an all-new OAV from Toho Video. Super Sonic Soldier Borgman 2, "New Century 2058," *a sequel to 1989's* The Borgman, "Last Battle" *OAV, is scheduled for a new lease on life starting this fall.*

When a mysterious stone falls upon the great metropolitan city of Megalo in 2030, a group of entities called the "Youma Machine Beasts" begin to wage war against humanity. To combat this menace from beyond, a team of superpowered cyborgs called "Borgmen" is created, led by the beautiful scientific genius Memory Gene.

In this new original animation video series set 28 years after the events of the original 1988 *Borgman* TV series, a Megalo City police officer named Ken encounters the Youma Machine Beasts and loses 60% of his body during their attack. Brought back from the brink of death by an operation recreating him as a cyborg à la *Robocop*, Ken is forced into service as part of the superpowered Borgman team formed to combat the evil Machine Beasts and their leader, the Youma Master. Troubled by his duty to wage war on the vicious Youma, the reluctant Ken must also weigh the benefits of using his newfound powers to protect his beloved sister.

Written and directed by Yasushi Murayama, *Super Sonic Soldier Borgman 2* features mecha designs by Takehiro Yamada and character designs by the ever-popular Michitaka Kikuchi (character designer for all previous *Borgman* animated series). Each 30-minute video in the three-volume series will retail for ¥6500. The first *Borgman* volume is scheduled to begin release this October.

A Tale of SevenCities

Based on the novel of the same name by Yoshiki Tanaka (author of the talking-heads space opera Legend of the Galactic Heroes *and the alternate-Earth medieval fantasy* Legend of Arslan*), the first of a new two-volume original animation video series titled* A Tale of Seven Cities *is scheduled for release this winter from Animate Film.*

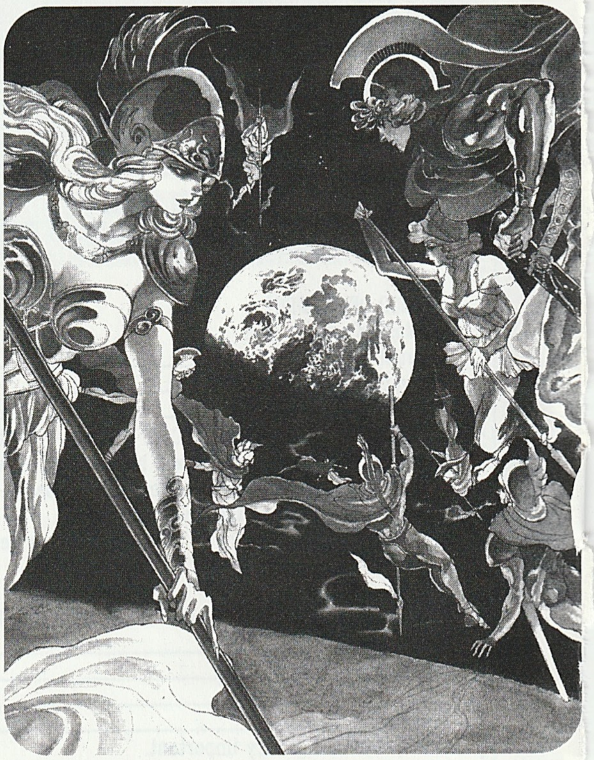
In the year 2099 A.D., the greatest catastrophe mankind has yet seen strikes the Earth when the planet topples and its rotational axis shifts 90 degrees to what was formerly the equator. For the next three years, rain, floods, earthquakes, volcanoes and winds—every single natural disaster that can be found in an almanac—plague the surface of the Earth.

As if that wasn't enough, nuclear facilities and biochemical weapons facilities release all their manmade poisons with a vengeance. Mankind, which once boasted a population of ten billion, is now left with two million moon colonists. In 2091, these Earth outlanders come back to repopulate the planet in seven cities scattered across the globe, built from scratch.

Reconstruction soon turns to cynicism, however, when the Lunar elitists, fearing Terran autonomy, construct a ring of military satellites around the Earth. This new system will detect any flight activity above the altitude of 500 meters and shoot it down immediately. When a meteor carrying an unknown virus lands on the moon and wipes out the Lunar population completely in 2136, it's estimated that the satellite system will remain functional for at least the next 200 hundred years.

As though tired of waiting for the day when they can fly again, the seven cities begin to engage in warfare against each other in the most modern of all wars without flight. The time is now 2190 A.D., T-minus 164 years and counting....

Each 30-minute volume of Animate's *A Tale of Seven Cities* will retail for ¥5800 and will feature direction by Akinori Nagaoka (*Record of Lodoss War*) and a script by Tomonobu Nobe. Character designs are by Tomomi Kobayashi, one of the talented pool of designers to come from the design crew of the bestselling Super Nintendo Entertainment System's *Final Fantasy* series. The first volume of *A Tale of Seven Cities* is scheduled for a December release.



Theatrical Release, Musical Planned for Crayon, Sailor Moon

This summer, two of Japan's most talked-about manga and television series will make it to the silver screen and take to the stage.

Crayon Shin-Chan

This July 11, the *Crayon Shin-Chan* animated film will premiere in Toei theaters nationwide. The popular manga by Yoshihito Usui has been serialized weekly since August of 1990 and the compiled manga volumes have sold over 10 million copies to date. The animated TV series, first broadcast in April of last year, has reached an incredible 20% viewership. It seems the antics of five-year-old Shin-Chan have been coasting on a rising wave of popularity.

After working a variety of jobs, *Crayon* creator Usui began working as a manga artist just before he turned thirty. Usui is now 35 and has two girls in elementary school. "I used to like writing scripts and making people laugh when I was in middle school," says Usui. "I look back on my childhood and look at my daughters for inspiration to make my manga come alive."

It seems that a number of Shin-Chan's phrases have recently found their way into the vocabularies of children. "I like seeing my work have an effect on children, but not too much effect," jokes Usui. "I don't want to feel responsible for exposing children to the bad influence of Shin-Chan's antics."

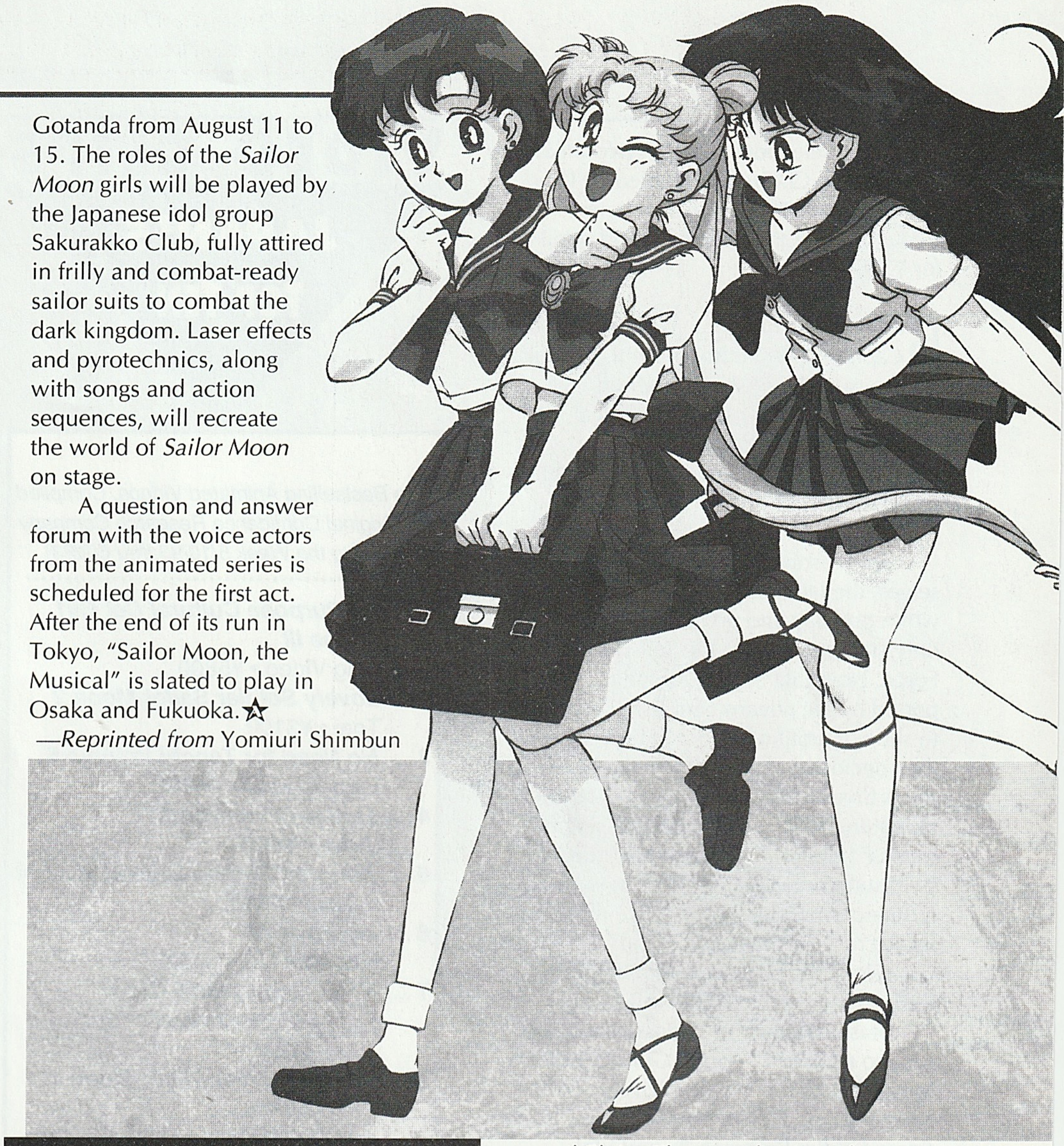
Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon

Sailor Moon is the story of Usagi Tsukino and four other girls who, clad in Japanese schoolgirl sailor suits, battle the forces of evil. Currently serialized in a *shojo* or girls' comic by creator Naoko Takeuchi, *Sailor Moon*'s popularity led to an animated series which began last March on TV Asahi and is still going strong. The popularity of the five girls who transfrom into sailor-suited soldiers has been nothing less than explosive; the two digest compilations released from Toei Video have sold over 80,000 units to date.

"Sailor Moon, the Musical" will run in Tokyo's Trade Insurance Hall in Gotanda from August 11 to 15. The roles of the *Sailor Moon* girls will be played by the Japanese idol group Sakurakko Club, fully attired in frilly and combat-ready sailor suits to combat the dark kingdom. Laser effects and pyrotechnics, along with songs and action sequences, will recreate the world of *Sailor Moon* on stage.

A question and answer forum with the voice actors from the animated series is scheduled for the first act. After the end of its run in Tokyo, "Sailor Moon, the Musical" is slated to play in Osaka and Fukuoka. ✰

—*Reprinted from* Yomiuri Shimbun



News You Can Use—Hot Off the Presses!

HOT FLASHES

Artmic's multimedia release of sci-fi thriller *Genocyber*, the manga version of which is currently available in English from Viz Comics, extends to video this fall with their release of the first episode in artist Tony Takezaki's (*AD Police*) new animated series.

Featuring character designs by Atsushi Yamagata (*The Hakkenden*), the story of the new OAV is said to head in a different direction than the manga currently being published in English by Viz Comics. Twins Elain and Diana (both roles played by Akiko Hiramatsu, "Nene," *Bubblegum Crisis*) are victimized by a weapons researcher named Kenneth who's also their father (Seizo Kato, "Count Lee," *Vampire Hunter D*).

In the OAV, Elain lacks intelligence and gestalt in place of her beast-like abilities, while Diana lacks movement and must wrap herself in an exoskeleton for mobility in place of her ability to control Elain. The two share a telempathic link, but that doesn't stop them from engaging in eventual mortal combat against the other.

Genocyber is scheduled for release through Bandai Visual on September 24. The first 50-minute volume will retail for ¥5800. As yet there is no information available on how many volumes the series will include.

Released under the title "Symphonic Oratorio Silent Möbius," a new CD from Victor Entertainment features seven new compositions "based on the BGM (background music) of *Silent Möbius* as its motif," performed by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. Music lovers may find it interesting to know that "Symphonic Oratorio" was recorded at a specially designed facility called a "tone studio" said to completely recreate the concert hall experience.

Conducted by Andrew Chistyarov, the Moscow Philharmonic features music and arrangements by Isao Wada, with additional selections by the Agafonnikov Philharmoic Chorus (conducted by I. Agafonnikov). The CD is distributed through Victor Entertainment and retails for ¥3000.

Based on the novel by *Irresponsible Captain Tyler* author Hitoshi Yoshioka and animated by Ashi Production (acclaimed for their singing magical idol princess genre), *Idol Defense Team Hummingbird* is a new original animation video from Toho Video scheduled for release this fall.

For reasons known only to themselves, the Japanese government acts on a whim one day and privatizes the nation's only standing militia, the Self-Defense Force. Now that they're no longer supported by the government the SDF needs to show a profit or go out of business, so they decide to promote their top women pilots (five sisters who make up "Team Hummingbird") as teenybopper singing stars or "idol" singers. Will the ordeal of swimsuit photo sessions and on-stage performances in bunny suits prove to be more crushing than a 7-G loop?

Idol Defense Team Hummingbird features the voices of Sakiko Tamagawa ("Pirotase," *Record of Lodoss War*), Yuri Amano ("Moemi," *Video Girl Ai*), Kotono Mitsuishi ("Sailor Moon," *Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon*), Hekiru Shiina ("Sara," *Super Sonic Soldier Borgman 2*), and idol-turned-voice-actor Akie Kusachi. Length of the new OAV is as yet undecided, but the price is set at ¥7000 yen and the release date is scheduled for September 1.☆

VIDEO CLIPS

JAPAN'S TOP TEN

The Bestselling Animated Videos, Compiled by Original Confidence Research Company (During the Week 5/10/93 thru 6/9/93)

1 .....***All Purpose Cultural Cat Girl Phase III***
King Video • ¥5800
2 .....***Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon 2***
Toei • ¥3100
3 .....***No Need for Tenchi Volume 6***
Pioneer LDC • ¥4800
4 .....***This is Greenwood VI***
Victor • ¥5800
5 .....***Armored Dragon Legend Villgust***
Bandai • ¥4800
6 .....***Moldiver #2***
Pioneer LDC • ¥4800
7 .....***New Century GPX Cyber Formula 11 • Volume Four***
VAP • ¥4800
8 .....***Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon 1***
Toei • ¥3100
9 .....***Ah! My Goddess • Volume One***
Kodansha/TBS/KSS • ¥5300
10 ....***Lupin III Caligostro's Castle***
Toho • ¥5500

WHAT THEY SAY THEY'RE WATCHING

The Top Ten Anime TV Shows in Japan Based on Animage Magazine Readers' Polls (From 3/11/93 thru 4/10/93)

1 ....***LOVELY SOLDIER Sailor Moon R***
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 7:00 p.m.
2 ....***The Poltergeist Report***
Fuji TV • Saturdays @ 6:30 p.m.
3 ....***Irresponsible Captain Tyler***
Tokyo TV • Mondays @ 6:00 p.m.
4 ....***Mobile Suit V-Gundam***
TV Asahi • Fridays @ 5:00 p.m.
5 ....***Dragon Ball Z***
Fuji TV • Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.
6 ....***Miracle Girls***
Japan TV • Fridays @ 5:00 p.m.
7 ....***Ribbon of the Little Princess***
Tokyo TV • Fridays @ 6:00 p.m.
8 ....***Papuwa of the South Seas***
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.
9 ....***Get a Grip, Tsuyoshi***
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 6:00 p.m.
(TIE)..***HERO EXPRESS Might Guyn***
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 5:00 p.m.
(TIE)..***Crayon Shin-Chan***
TV Asahi • Mondays @ 7:00 p.m.
10 ....***LITTLE WOMEN Nan and Jo***
.......Fuji TV • Sundays @ 7:30 p.m.

...AND WHAT THE RATINGS SAY THEY'RE WATCHING

***The Tokyo Top Ten Anime TV Shows Based on Rating Shares Compiled by Video Research** (During the Week of 3/29/93 thru 4/4/93)*

1 ....***Sazae-San***
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 6:30 p.m.
2 ....***Crayon Shin-Chan***
TV Asahi • Mondays @ 7:00 p.m.
3 ....***Get a Grip, Tsuyoshi***
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 6:00 p.m.
4 ....***Dragon Ball Z***
Fuji TV • Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.
5 ....***Doraemon***
TV Asahi • Fridays @ 7:00 p.m.
6 ....***Ribbon of the Little Princess***
Tokyo TV • Fridays @ 6:00 p.m.
7 ....***Super Bikkuriman***
TV Asahi • Sundays @ 8:30 a.m.
8 ....***THREE SISTERS OF THE FINISHING MOVE Shushutorian***
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 9:00 a.m.
9 ....***Batman, The Animated Series***
Tokyo TV • Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m.
10 ...***Hot-Blooded Ultimate Gosaurar***
Tokyo TV • Wednesdays @ 6:00 p.m.

Highlights from the Top Japanese Anime Magazines

Between the Covers

JULY, 1993

Japan publishes more books and magazines than any other nation in the world. Naturally, this means more publications devoted to anime and manga. Use this handy guide to keep up with the exciting (but sometimes confusing) anime and manga publishing world.

ANIMAGE (Tokuma)

NEWS & UPDATES: "Big TYLER"—Justy Ueki Tyler and the Secrets of His Success • "The Big Changes for MIRACLE GIRLS" • "When Reality Catches up to Animation," Close-Up on V-GUNDAM and PATLABOR 2 (Plus Their Creators) • More
REGULAR FEATURES: Top Ten Characters • Love Horoscope • Anime Karaoke • Animation People • Let's Go to the Movies • TV Animation World • OAV Hotline • More
SHORT STORY: "Letter from the Red Devil," by C.W. Nicol
MANGA FEATURES: NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND by Hayao Miyazaki • YADAMON by Suezen • LITTLE MOLE MOGUTAN by Noriko Nagano
GIVEAWAYS: AH! MY GODDESS Book • "GUNDAM Girls" Stickers

ANIMEDIA (Gakken)

NEWS & UPDATES: "Modern-Day Romance of the Three Kingdoms," Secrets of the Animated Manga Series' Popularity • "Red Alert!" Close-Up on V-GUNDAM, PAPUA, GOSAURA, BIKKURIMAN, MIKAN • Popular Anime Special, "Are You MIGHT GUYN type or TYLER type?" • More
REGULAR FEATURES: Video Journal • Anime-Eye • TV Anime City • Media Land • Idol Pin-Up • Line-Art Section: PAPUA OF THE SOUTH SEAS • Monthly Close-Up • New TV Show Voice-Actor Data File • Movie News • More
MANGA FEATURE: WHIRLWIND WILD BOY ARCO by Miku Nanase and The Arco Project
GIVEAWAYS: Anime Puzzle Notebook • MIGHT GUYN and IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER Poster • Princes and Princesses Stickers

ANIME V (Gakken)

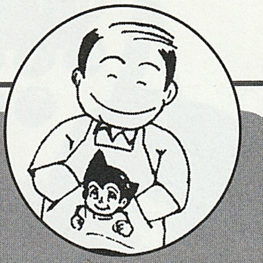
NEWS & UPDATES: Readers Vote on the Ten Best OAVs of 1992 • "The Lovely Warriors of NG KNIGHT RAMUME & 40 DX" • "THIS IS GREENWOOD Forever" • NEW CENTURY GPX CYBER FORMULA • More
REGULAR FEATURES: New OAV Navigator • Catch Up With Popular Voice Actors • "Create Your Own OAV" • The Column Battle Royale • The New Items • Anime Scramble • Video Games Section • Music and Event Info • Readers' Page
SPECIAL FEATURES: Interview with Pink Aomata, Original Artist of the New OAV FIGHT!! • "Invitation to DraCon '93 (Voice-Acting and Anime Song Contest Hosted by ANIME V and ANIMEDIA)
MANGA FEATURE: NADESHIKO SHICHIMI ("Udon the Pepper Beauty") by Takeru Miyao
GIVEAWAYS: ALL-PURPOSE CULTURAL CAT GIRL and FIGHT!! Poster

NEWTYPE (Kadokawa)

NEWS & UPDATES: "Usso's Battle" (GUNDAM-V) • "Replay: SAILOR MOON R" • "Bad News Travels Fast," IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER • More
REGULAR FEATURES: The Official Art of GUNDAM-V • Newtype Express • Anime Land • Express • Scramble • Newtype Forum • Fanzine Review • AV Marketplace • Modeling Section • Time Capsule Anime Snapshot Gallery • More
MANGA FEATURES: FIVE STAR STORIES by Mamoru Nagano • DARK ANGEL by Kia Asamiya • MARIONETTE GENERATION by Haruhiko Mikimoto
SHORT STORY: "Equal Ganesis," by Takahashi and Murase
GIVEAWAYS: PATLABOR 2 Line Art Book • IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLER Poster

A Unique Perspective from our Manga and Anime Insider

FROM THE FOREST



As a manager of Manga no Mori *("Comics Forest"), the largest comic/anime merchandise specialty chain in Japan,* ***Takashi Oshiguchi*** *has been involved in the industry not only as a retailer but as a journalist for more years than he can count. In addition to his many articles, Oshiguchi writes occasionally for* ANIMAGE *magazine and has had his own column in the comic trade journal* COMIC BOX.

THE RPG CONNECTION

In Japan, the relationship between animation and video games is very intimate. We've come to expect that popular manga will eventually be animated for television, or as an OAV, which will in turn become a video game. Rumiko Takahashi's *Ranma 1/2* is one example. With a story as strong as this one, success in both juvenile and grownup fan markets is virtually guaranteed.

Character-based games aside, there are many role-playing games in which the main player character or several MPCs travel across a map, fighting enemy monsters, gaining abilities and experience points as they go. When I say RPGs, what I'm referring to is not those games based on complex board games but games which take place in a fantasy world. In Japan, there aren't many fans who play board games based on strategical or historical facts. It's the D&D-type games which hold the Japanese market in thrall.

That's why it's no longer necessary to provide lengthy explanations in video games on things such as the usage of magic spells, enchanted items, monsters and other crossovers from RPGs. Naturally, this trend also shows up in animation.

Audiences are no longer surprised or confused when a character suddenly starts chanting a spell apropos of nothing. Behind the anime and manga hit *Silent Möbius* (in which a group of women uses spells and magic circles in a future Tokyo) lurks a market which understands this game world very well. The properties of a pentagram come as no surprise to fans who've cut their teeth on RPGs.

Getting even closer to its RPG origins is the type of animation which centers on the familiar subset of a knight, a member of the faerie kingdom, a cleric and a magic-using type journeying off for grand adventure. *Record of Lodoss War*, an OAV series featuring a group of adventurers exactly as I've just described, would most likely never have been animated if video games weren't such a strong part of the entertainment industry.

Record of Lodoss War, which got its start as a real-time game transcript in a magazine for hardcore Japanese gamers, was so popular it was even novelized. Born from the fantasies of gaming enthusiasts, *Record of Lodoss War* introduced new ideas and charmed a whole new group of fans when it was finally animated.

Due in large part to the success of *Record of Lodoss War* (record sales of over 50,000 units sold per OAV volume have been reported), the number of animation videos in which knights, magic users and their friends go on adventures has increased significantly. Stories where magic spells mix with mecha create a whole new subset of the genre.

OAVs based on video games are another example, although not usually very successful. The quality itself isn't bad, but it takes extraordinary production and originality in the animation in order to interest gaming fans in game-based videos. (One example which comes to mind is *Ys*.)

Armored Dragon Legend Villgust is one OAV blessed with a good staff which is successful both commercially and artistically. It was made well, with a good understanding of those who would most likely buy it; i.e., those gaming fans who support animation.

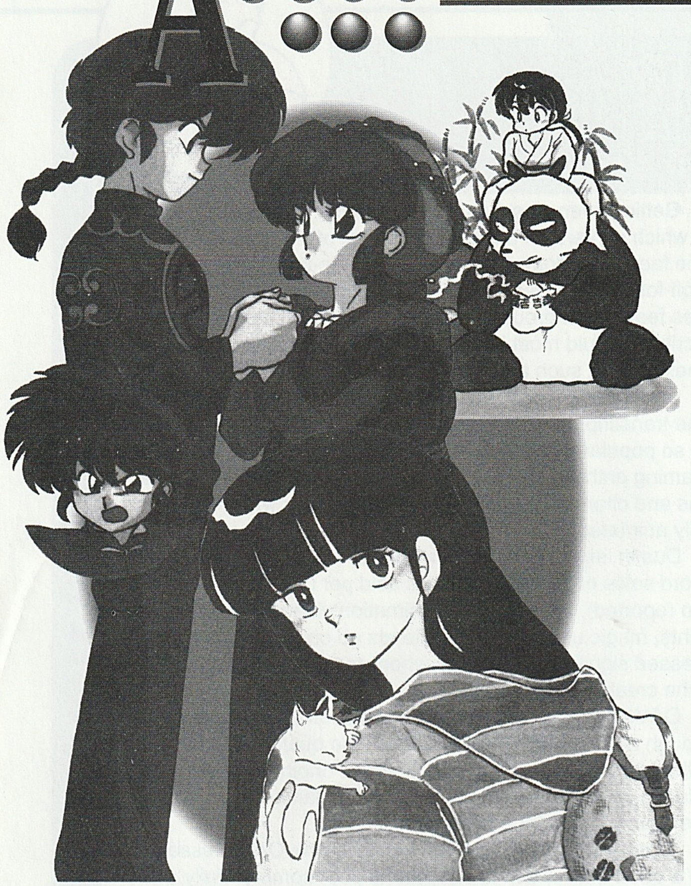
OAV Release Schedule Coming Soon in Japan

Direct from Japan, this month's most accurate and up-to-date original animation video release schedule.

★= Not yet known. ❤ = Series reviewed/more news in this issue. ✗ = Recommended for mature viewers only.

ON SALE	FORMAT	TITLE	ORDER NOS. (VHS/LD)	SOLD THRU	PRICE (VHS/LD)	LENGTH	PRODUCTION COMPANY
7/1	VHS	Ushio and Tora 8	SA4463	Shogakukan/Toho Video	¥4800	0:27	Pastel
7/7	VHS/LD	Crimson Wolf	TOVA-1125/TOLA-1136 (CLV)	Toshiba EMI	¥12360/¥7800	0:60	A.P.P.P.
7/9	VHS/LD	Free-Kick Toward Tomorrow 13	TYVY-1090/TYLY-1090 (CLV)	Toshiba EMI	¥9000/¥7800	0:95	Ashi Production
7/9	VHS	✗ Erotic Beast High School 4	SIH-1032	Daiei	¥14214	0:46	Studio Flagship
7/21	VHS/LD	Ys, Citadel of the Heavens Volume Four	KIVA-159/KILA-53 (CAV)	Kadokawa Shoten/King Record	¥5800/¥5800	0:30	Tokyo Kids
7/21	VHS/LD	KO Century Three Beastketeers 2 • Volume Two	★	Sony Music Entertainment	¥4800/¥4800	0:29	Animate Film
7/22	LD	Ambassador Magma Volume One	BELL-585 (CLV)	Bandai Visual	¥5800	0:50	Visual Workshop
7/23	VHS	Sleepless Oedo!	VIVF-10095	Shueisha/Victor Entertainment	¥4900	0:30	Madhouse
7/23	★	Mellow	★	Knack/KSS	★	★	★
7/23	VHS/LD	Epic Fantasy Ellcia Volume Four	JHE-400/JVLA69012 (CAV)	CIC Victor	¥4800/¥6900	Approx. 0:40	J.C. Staff
7/25	VHS/LD	Machine God Corps 4	PIVA-1016/PILA-1174 (CLV)	Pioneer LDC	¥4800/¥4800	0:30	Galactic Empire
7/25	VHS/LD	Moldiver 4	PIVA-1010/PILA-1142 (CLV)	Pioneer LDC	¥4800/¥4800	0:30	A.I.C.
7/25	LD	Bastard!! III	PILA-1151 (CLV)	Pioneer LDC	¥7800	★	A.I.C.

The best of the current releases and the latest news straight from the American anime industry. With the emergence of U.S.-based anime subbing and dubbing companies, it's more important now than ever to know who's releasing what, where, why and how. ***Dateline: America*** *is your one-stop U.S. anime information source.*



Back to Viz-ness With New Video Line

Under the imprint "Viz Video," San Francisco-based Viz Comics has announced that they will enter the English anime market as early as November of this year with the dubbed release of Mermaid's Scar, *an original animation video based on the comic of the same name by manga wunderkind Rumiko Takahashi.*

"We're very excited to be joining the ranks of the American anime industry at last," says Viz Comics Managing Editor Satoru Fujii. "This is something we've been wanting to do ever since we first began publishing manga in English. With the way our company has been growing over the past year, at last the time finally seems to be right."

Scheduled for release in Japan this October, *Mermaid's Scar* is the sequel to Takahashi's *Mermaid Forest*, previously released in the U.S. as a subtitled 55-minute OAV by U.S. Manga Corps last March. An English-translated version of Takahashi's original *Mermaid Forest* manga series is currently being serialized in ANIMERICA, with plans for a graphic novel version published by Viz "somewhere down the road," according to Fujii.

"The works of Rumiko Takahashi have always been very popular among our readers," says Fujii, "and I don't think we could have chosen a better title to launch our new video line if we'd tried. U.S. Manga Corps did a great job with *Mermaid Forest*; we hope to do an equally good job with *Mermaid's Scar*."

Viz has also announced that they will be releasing the new three-volume *Ranma 1/2* original animation video series, the first volume of which is scheduled to begin release in Japan during the end of this year. Viz plans to begin releasing their English-dubbed version early next year.

Although little is known at this point about production details, ANIMERICA has learned that the new *Ranma 1/2* OAV series will continue the storyline of the recently ended Japanese television series. First published in Shogakukan's weekly manga magazine *Shonen Sunday* in 1988, *Ranma 1/2* was first animated in 1989 and ended its 161-episode weekly half-hour run on Fuji TV last year, prompting the extension of the series via the OAV format in response to viewer demand.

"Releasing anime videos related to our manga titles seems to be such a natural follow-up," says Fujii. "Rather than trying to compete with the several companies already well established in the American market, Viz plans to concentrate on natural tie-ins to our manga titles such as *Mermaid's Scar* and *Ranma 1/2*." *Striker*, a fast-moving "biblepunk" tale written by Hiroshi Takashige and illustrated by Ryoji Minagawa, was mentioned by Fujii as another manga title scheduled for release as an English dub from Viz Video "in the near future."

"For now, we're concentrating on dubbing," says Fujii. "Whether we decide to release subtitled videos as well is something we'll have to seriously consider. As always, it'll be up to the market to decide."

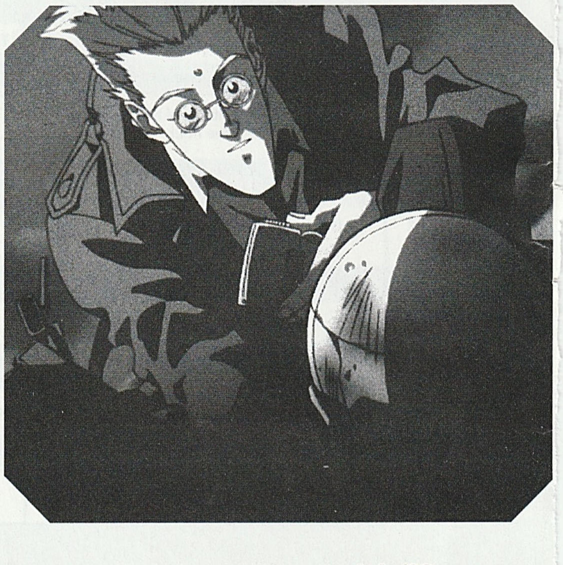
The Battle Begins With A.D. Vision this Summer

Texas-based A.D. Vision, whose previous subtitled releases include the sexy romp Devil Hunter Yohko *and the intergalactic adventure* Sol Bianca, *has announced that they will release the first of KSS' new two-volume original animation video* Battle Angel, "Rusty Angel" *(released in Japan under the title "Gunnm") this summer.*

Based on the original manga by newcomer Yukito Kishiro, the story of *Battle Angel* takes place in a vast, futuristic scrapyard home to refuse both human and not. Daisuke Ido, an eccentric inventor, stumbles across the remains of a two- to three-hundred-year-old cyborg he names "Alita" (or "Gally"), beginning an unusual relationship between creator and creation.

"We're very excited to be able to do this project," says Matt Greenfield, A.D. Vision president. "Who would have thought we could have come so far in only a year?" Although the new animated version will have many points in common with the manga version currently being published Viz Comics, Greenfield tells ANIMERICA that *Battle Angel* will feature "a lot of tightening in the story, with revised character designs. It's truly beautiful." Greenfield also says that the video will introduce two new characters including Ido's ex-girlfriend, "a sort of rival to Alita/Gally."

The original staff for the two-volume *Battle Angel* OAV is unusually talented, featuring editorial supervision by Taro Rin (*Galaxy Express 999, Dagger of Kamui*); direction by Hiroshi Fukumiya (*Locke the Superman* movie); script by Akinori Kondo



(*Five Star Stories*); character designs and executive art direction by Noboteru Yuki (*Record of Lodoss War*); and art direction by Tai Fujikawa (*Kujakuo 2*). Production is by Animate Film.

A.D. Vision currently plans to release both 30-minute *Battle Angel* OAVs in their original Japanese with English subtitles on a single VHS hi-fi stereo videotape. U.S. and Canadian release is scheduled to begin on August 21, the same date set for the Japanese release of the second volume in the series, "Tears Sign." "Rusty Angel," the first *Battle Angel* volume, was originally released in Japan on June 21.

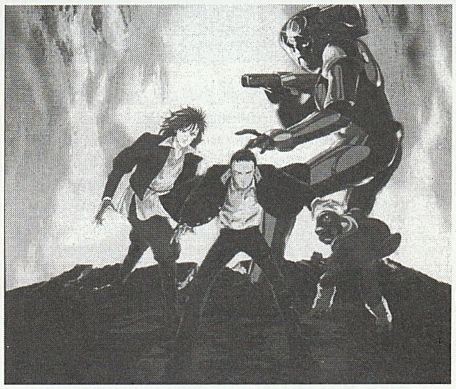
"There's no way we can *not* do a dubbed version of the series eventually," says Greenfield. "It's possible we may even release *Battle Angel* as a theatrical feature at some point." Suggested retail price for A.D. Vision's digitally mastered, digitally transferred *Battle Angel* videocassette is currently set at $34.95 (U.S. dollars). Look to ANIMERICA for more details as they become available.

Join the Corps and Escape the Heat-Harmagedon and Odin from U.S.M.C.

*This summer, anime fans searching for a way to escape the heat of the day will able to escape into the cool of a deep space night with two classic animated releases from New York-based U.S. Manga Corps—*Harmagedon *and* Photon Space Sailer Starlight Odin.

Deep in the depths of darkest space, an eternal evil is laying waste to half the universe...and now Earth is directly in its path. Somehow, a young psychic named Princess Luna must form a defense against an irresistible force, a task billions have tried and failed to accomplish before her. As Earth starts to falter and the evil known as Genma sends his advance agents on the attack, it may be too late for anyone to turn the tide!

Featuring some of the industry's most well-known anime and manga veterans, *Harmagedon* teams renowned director Taro Rin (see above) with co-writer and co-producer Shotaro Ishimori (longtime collaborator of the legendary "God of Manga" himself, Osamu Tezuka) and character designer Katsuhiro Otomo (*Akira*). First released by Kadokawa as a theatrical feature in Japan on March 12, 1983, the 132-minute *Harmagedon* is based on an original story by Kazumasa Hirai and Shotaro Ishimori and has long been a staple in science fiction and anime convention viewing rooms for the superb quality of its animation and its breathtaking action sequences.



Photon Space Sailer Starlight Odin, released in its original Japanese with English subtitles last May, will also be released as an English dub from U.S. Manga Corps this month. History is marked by daring voyages across unexplored oceans. Now, in the year 2099, another such voyage is about to begin as the futuristic spacecraft *Starlight* prepares to venture forth. Equipped with an experimental gravity-control drive, the ornate vessel is staffed by wizened officers and impetuous young people eager for adventure...but as they launch into the ocean of space, more danger lies ahead than any of them could have imagined!

Created by Yoshinobu Nishizaki, the mind behind the well-known *Star Blazers* (aired in Japan under the name "Space Cruiser Yamato"), *Odin* brings Nishizaki's flair for epic space opera into new territory with some of the most dazzling theatrical animation ever seen. "*Yamato* helped bring Japanese animation to American consciousness," says U.S. Manga Corps. "*Odin* takes it a step farther."

Both *Harmagedon* and *Odin* are scheduled for release on July 7. *Harmagedon* will retail at the suggested price of $39.95; *Odin* is priced at $29.95. Both videos will be released in color and in stereo. ☆

Urotsuki Doji Confirmed July Play Dates

CITY	THEATER	PLAY DATE
Lexington, KY	Kentucky Theater	7/8/93
Sacramento, CA	Landmark	7/9/93
Anchorage, AK	Silver Screen	7/16/93
Cleveland, OH	Cinematheque	7/30/93

For additional theaters showing the *Urotsuki Doji* theatrical release, contact Central Park Media.

VIDEO CLIPS
AMERICA'S TOP SELLERS

The Bestselling Anime Videos, Based on Pre-Orders Compiled by Capital City Distribution, Inc. (June, 1993)

1•• *Guyver, "Out of Control"*
L.A. Hero/Dark Image Entertainment • $34.95

2••• *Fist of the North Star*
Streamline Pictures • $29.95

3••• *Grave of the Fireflies*
Central Park Media • $39.95

4••• *Dirty Pair, "Affair of Nolandia"*
Streamline Pictures • $24.95

5••• *Macross II, "Lovers Again" Volume Two*
L.A. Hero/U.S. Renditions
$24.95

6••• *Macross II, "Lovers Again" Volume One*
L.A. Hero/U.S. Renditions
$24.95

7••• *3 x 3 Eyes • Volume Two*
Streamline Pictures • $14.95

ANIMERICA Behind the Scenes

Anime Q & A

Although it's usually the artists who get all the glory, there could be no anime or manga if there wasn't a dedicated corps of people working behind the scenes to produce our favorite pastime. ***Anime Q & A*** *brings you mini-interviews with the industry professionals who make it all possible. By* ***Jeff Yang***

*From deep in the heart of Texas, A.D. Vision has burst onto the anime scene with two hot new releases—*Devil Hunter Yohko*, a comic-horror jaunt featuring a leggy, sword-swinging female monster-buster, and the sweeping space drama* Sol Bianca. ANIMERICA *recently caught up with* ***Matt Greenfield****, president of A.D. Vision, at ChibiCon in Stony Brook, Long Island.*

Q: One thing seems clear—you're not just involved in this for the money. I mean, you're also a fan. When did you first get into anime?

A: I discovered anime in 1984…or manga, really. I saw an issue of *Epic Illustrated* which featured some of the work of Go Nagai. Then I went down to a big comic store in Houston, and found a box of roman albums [*pictorial books published to accompany anime series or features—Ed.*]; I bought one for *Xabungle*, and I liked what I saw. I went back and picked up *Nausicaä*. And I was hooked.

Q: And is that when A.D. Vision began?

A: Well, no. A.D. Vision started up in September of 1992. Back then, I *tried* to interest people in the idea of distributing anime, but there just wasn't a belief that this kind of a market existed. So I did the next best thing—I opened up a retail store, selling and renting anime videos.

A couple of years later, another store owner walked into my store, took down my inventory, and began retailing a duplicate of my line. That was crazy; two stores in one city with exactly the same list. So we called a powwow. Together we realized something—that the subtitled tapes available really reflected the tastes mainly of fans in California. A lot of Texas fans were disappointed. Fans in Texas look for the graphics—sex and action. The coasts are more oriented toward story, mostly because they have better access to translators and scripts.

Q: What's an example of what you mean by "Texas tastes"?

A: Some of the early titles that came out, things like *Gunbuster* and *Bubblegum Crisis*, had a definite flair. But recently, things like *Nadia* and *Urusei Yatsura* are filling those niches, and there isn't a whole lot of *Bubblegum Crisis*-type anime out there now. That's when we realized that someone could really do well if they catered to this other market. An example? *Fist of the North Star*. Not a great movie, but in our stores, it did enormous business—for every *Kimagure Orange Road* we sold, we were selling 600 *Fist*s. Because it filled a niche.

Q: So now A.D. Vision is the new kid on the anime block. How do you guys differ from the other releasing companies, who are based out on the coasts?

A: We're kind of from a different background from those guys—we're coming out of a retail and telemarketing background, so we tend to look very closely at marketing. Let me put it this way. With *Devil Hunter Yohko*, we had a cute girl with a sword fighting demons. We *knew* it'd sell like hotcakes. The fact that it was a good movie means that our customers will keep on coming back. You know Roger Corman? We kind of think of him as our guru—he had a formula for a movie that sells itself…sex plus violence plus humor. And that's *Yohko*. Right there.

Q: What was it like to work with Toho in bringing *Yohko* over?

A: Our biggest argument with Toho was over the title. Toho wanted us to call it, in English, "Yohko the Devil Hunter," which to us sounded like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. And the way *we* wanted it was just *Mamono Hunter Yohko*. They didn't want it identified that way. Besides, people who heard it would say, "What the hell is a 'Mamono'? What is this 'Kimono Hunter Yohko' thing?" So we compromised.

Q: How has *Yohko* done so far?

A: It's a hit. Cute little *Yohko* has paid for *Sol Bianca*, our other release so far. And we have the rights for *Yohko 2* and *3* already, and *Sol Bianca 2*. We've been working on deals for other projects, of course [*recently, A.D. Vision picked up the rights to* Gunnm*, published by Viz Comics in English under the name* Battle Angel Alita]; there are so many shows I'm personally in love with, but I'm kind of stuck in a nasty situation. I'm trapped between fandom and business.

Q: So how do you choose which tapes to go after, if it isn't just personal taste?

A: Ultimately, we use three criteria when deciding whether or not to bid on something. (A) Is it something the fans are going to want? (B) Is it something that video stores can be convinced to buy? (C) How badly burned out is it on the fan market? If the fans have been circulating it all over the place, it just won't make money. And the competition for the good new stuff is starting to get stiff—I can tell you there are two or three new releases which we've been looking at in which there have been something like *seven* companies bidding.

Q: Does A.D. Vision have anything else planned for the near future?

A: Well, we'll be coming out with the first issue of our new *dojinshi* [*fan-press manga—Ed.*]. It'll just be called *A.D. Visions.* In terms of video releases, we're going to take the mine-sweeper route—step back a little and see what goes on, see what the other companies do, because we're way ahead of where we expected to be at this time. I mean, right now, A.D. Vision has one permanent full-time employee—me. Everybody else is freelance or temporary. We'll wait to see how *Sol Bianca* does, and we can always do *Sol Bianca 2*, and *Devil Hunter Yohko 3*. *Yohko 3* should be amazing; in the third video, Yohko falls in love with the guy from hell…literally! ☆

……

Jeff Yang is a New York-based freelance writer.

Video Release Schedule Coming Soon in America

News on the latest releases from the American subtitled and dubbed animation industry. ★= Unlisted/Unknown. ❤ = Series reviewed/more news in this issue.

SCHEDULED RELEASE	FORMAT(VHS/LD)	TITLE	CATALOG NOS.	SOLDTHRU	PRICE (VHS/LD)	NOTES
7/7	Subtitled VHS	❤ Harmagedon	USM 1038	U.S. Manga Corps	$39.95	1988 theatrical release; features character designs by AKIRA's Katsuhiro Otomo
7/7	Dubbed VHS	❤ Photon Space Sailer Starlight Odin	USM 1074	U.S. Manga Corps	$29.95	English-dubbed version of May's subtitled release
7/15	Subtitled VHS	Super-Deformed Double Feature: "Scramble Wars" & "Ten Little Gall Force"	AT093-004	AnimEigo	$34.95	Two parodies of classic Artmic animation; 50 minutes
7/15	Subtitled VHS	Urusei Yatsura OAV Volume Five • "Nagisa's Fiancé" & "The Electric Household Guard"	AT092-208	AnimEigo	$39.95	Fifth AnimEigo UY OAV release
7/20	Subtitled VHS	Devilman • Volume Two	★	L.A. Hero/Dark Image Entertainment	$34.95	Second of two volumes in 1987 OAV series
7/20	English VHS	Ultraman, "Toward the Future" Vols. Seven & Eight	★	L.A. Hero/Dark Image Entertainment	$14.95	The Australian-produced live-action television series
7/25	Subtitled LD	Madox-01/Riding Bean Double Feature	AT093-004	AnimEigo	$64.95	Single-LD version of two previous AnimEigo releases
7/31	Dubbed VHS	Ambassador Magma Volume Two	★	L.A. Hero/Dark Image Entertainment	$24.95	Episodes 4 and 5 of recent OAV series based on classic series by "God of Comics" Osamu Tezuka
7/31	Dubbed VHS	The Guyver • Volume Five	★	L.A. Hero U.S. Renditions	$24.95	Episodes 9 and 10

With the increasing availability of English-translated titles from U.S.-based publishers, it's easier than ever for the non-Japanese reader to enter the exciting world of manga. Whether it's an English adaptation or an American original, each issue of ***Manga Close-Up*** *brings you the latest news and reviews from the American manga industry.*

Area 88, Urusei Yatsura to Return

Beginning this fall, two of the series most often requested by anime and manga fans will make their triumphant return to the world of English-language manga when Kaoru Shintani's sturm und drang Area 88 *is once again published by Viz Comics in late fall, followed by manga wunderkind Rumiko Takahashi's wacky boy-meets-alien love comedy* Urusei Yatsura *next winter.*

"The letters, post cards and phone calls urging us to reconsider publishing *Area 88* and *Urusei Yatsura* have never stopped, not for a moment," says Viz Comics Managing Editor Satoru Fujii. "When American fans discover a series they really like, they're very loyal to that artist."

Originally published by Viz from 1987 to 1989, the romantic lines of *Area 88*'s art style clearly show a heavy influence from Shintani's former mentor Leiji Matsumoto (*Space Pirate Captain Harlock, Galaxy Express 999*). James Hudnall, rewriter on Viz's English manga series, calls *Area 88* "very allegorical, although it (later becomes) more like a soap opera…all these different characters, the grand scope and sweep—it's almost an epic."

Area 88 is scheduled to replace Tony Takezaki's *AD Police*, a cyberpunk tale set in the dark world of *Bubblegum Crisis* now running in ANIMERICA; *Urusei Yatsura*, another popular Viz series on indefinite hold until recently, is scheduled to replace *Mermaid Forest* when Takahashi's uniquely macabre tale moves from ANIMERICA to being printed as a monthly Viz comic in January, 1994.

Described by series rewriter Gerard "The Trouble With Girls" Jones as a "dense, funny, character-rich, pun-heavy tale of adolescent lust and stupidity," *Urusei Yatsura* has sold over 22 million copies in Japan and has established diminutive creator Rumiko Takahashi as one of her country's most wealthy (not to mention most popular) artists. Over 34 compilation volumes of the weekly series reprinted from Shogakukan's *Young Sunday* manga magazine have been printed to date. The series is also available in English from Viz in the form of a two-volume graphic novel series under the title *Lum * Urusei Yatsura*.

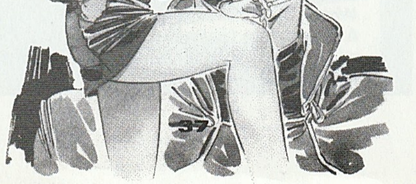
"This is definitely a case of Viz Comics' responding to the demands of its readers," says Fujii. "It's a good feeling to be able to give the fans what they've been asking for."

Dark Horse Rides to War This Summer with Venus Trade Paperback

In a joint promotion effort with U.S. Manga Corps, Oregon-based Dark Horse Comics has announced that they will release a two-volume compilation of Yoshikazu Yasuhiko's Venus Wars *this summer in a prestigious trade paperback format.*

In the year 2083 A.D., humanity has inhabited Venus for only eighty years but already full-scale war is threatening mankind's precarious hold on the planet. Colonial forces battle each other for power and territory while the Terran government looks on warily, ready to intervene. High-powered "octopus" supertanks clash with supercharged, one-ton "battlebikes" in awesome displays of mechanized combat and cataclysmic destruction. Ken Seno, daredevil cyclist, rides into danger unafraid to die. But if he falls, so does the last hope for life on Venus!

"Yasuhiko's a great storyteller with a great visual sense that translates directly from his video work," says Dark Horse editor John Weeks. "His style on *Venus Wars* is really a cross-pollination of his anime and manga work, those two Japanese art forms that we all love so well."



First serialized in Gakken's manga magazine *Comic Nora* in 1987, *Venus Wars* was also released as a theatrical feature two years later on March 11, 1989. Directed by Yasuhiko himself (or "Yaz," as he's known in the industry), the 104-minute film was released in its original Japanese with English subtitles by U.S. Manga Corps in March at a suggested retail price of $39.95.

Written and illustrated by Yoshikazu Yasuhiko, the first volume of Dark Horse's *Venus Wars* trade paperback is translated by Alan Gleason with rewriting by Toren Smith and a painted cover by Yasuhiko. The 256-page squarebound volume will be printed in black and white and will retail for $13.95 USA/$17.45 CAN and is scheduled to ship on August 31.

Street Fighter II Leaps to the Screen

The worlds of interactive video entertainment and motion pictures move one step closer to synthesis as the Edward R. Pressman Film Corporation and electronic entertainment leader Capcom Co. Ltd. join forces to produce a live-action feature based on the most successful video/computer game in history, Capcom's "Street Fighter II."

In a precedent-setting move, showing its commitment to motion-picture projects and its confidence in "Street Fighter II," Capcom Co. Ltd. has announced that they will co-finance the production. Southern California-based Malibu Comics, who recently began publishing an American-produced comic book version of the game, apparently have no other connection with the upcoming movie.

The feature, to be written and directed by action-adventure veteran Steven de Souza (*Die Hard, Die Hard 2: Die Harder, Commando, Running Man* and co-writer of *48 Hours*), brings together twelve martial artists who duel in the "Street Fighter" tradition—each with a distinctive nationality, fighting style and driving purpose behind every punch—to a contemporary story of hostage rescue. Amidst a war-torn international hot-spot which has drawn not only the U.N. and brave humanitarians but mercenaries, drug dealers and evil warlords, the world-famous underground street-fighting gang is born.

"Street Fighter II" allows players to create battles between the best warriors in the world including Guile, an American marine;

Ken, a skillful American martial artist; Ryu, Ken's Japanese alter-ego and training partner; Chun Li, the *wushu* warrior and strongest woman in the world; E. Honda, Japan's premiere sumo wrestler; Zangief, a proud Russian wrestler; the heavyweight boxer Balrog; Vega, a vain matador; Sagat, a scarred Thai kickboxer; Blanka, a mysterious fighter from the jungles of Brazil; Dhalsim, a yoga master from India; and the invincible Grand Master Bison.

Edward R. Pressman Film Corporation is an independent Hollywood production company with more than 35 films to its credit including the Academy Award-winning *Reversal of Fortune* and *Wall Street*, the recent *Hoffa* and *Bad Lieutenant*, as well as *Conan the Barbarian, Homicide, Talk Radio, Plenty, Blue Steel, To Sleep With Anger, True Stories, Badlands, Das Boot* and *Phantom of the Paradise*.

The "Street Fighter II" movie will be executive-produced by Galaxy Films partner Sasha Harari who, after a successful career in the high-technology and computer industry, moved into the film business and produced Oliver Stone's *The Doors*.

New manga, industry trends, and more!

Extreme Close-Up

*"Is that a daisy, dear, or are you just glad to see me?" All kidding aside, girls' or shojo manga has got to be one of the most misunderstood subgenres in the entire manga industry. With this new column and his ongoing Ph.D. thesis (an industry first, as far as we know), manga scholar **Matt Thorn** is aiming to do for shojo manga what Schodt did for manga in general.*

Moto Hagio—The Beethoven of Shojo Manga?

Two of my favorite *shojo* manga artists are Yumiko Oshima and Moto Hagio, both of whom I mentioned in my April column as being among the "founding mothers" of the genre. For me, Hagio is to Oshima as Beethoven is to Mozart. Oshima is something of a mad genius, always teetering on the brink of chaos but rarely faltering. Hagio is more intellectual. When she seems to be rushing to meet a deadline, the structure of her stories can easily fall apart, but when she disciplines herself, she produces carefully wrought masterpieces.

The first *shojo* manga I ever read was one such masterpiece entitled *The Heart of Toma*, a classic that deals with a theme common in *shojo* manga, but often shocking to Americans…same-sex love. *The Heart of Toma* is set in a vaguely European boys' boarding school sometime in the twentieth century. Toma, an underclassman whose love for an upperclassman has gone unrequited, commits suicide, leaving behind a final letter to his beloved. "To Yuri, in parting. This is my love. This is the sound of my heart. Surely you must understand."

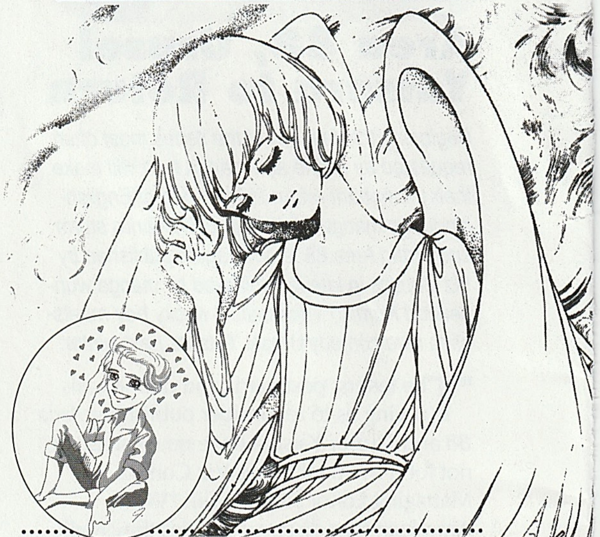
Shortly after Toma's death, a new boy appears who bears an uncanny resemblance to the deceased. This boy, Eric, becomes the focus of the pent-up feelings of the boys who had been close to Toma, particularly Yuri, the boy who could not return Toma's love. The story is far too complex to summarize here, except to say that Yuri finally faces up to the fact that the *had* been in love with Toma, but had felt unworthy of love because he had been gang-raped by older boys when he himself was an underclassman. Yuri leaves the school to enter the priesthood. This I take to be the "consummation" of his love for Toma, in that (A) the Japanese believe that the dead become a part of "God," and (B) to become a priest is to "marry" God.

Pretty wild? My thumbnail sketch of the story may sound corny, but I haven't met a reader yet, male or female, who wasn't moved to tears by *The Heart of Toma*. When *The Heart of Toma* was made into a live-action film (*Summer Vacation 1999*), the boys were all played by girls "in drag." (!?) Sometime I'll tell you about another Hagio masterpiece—this one science fiction—entitled *Marginal*. (Viz once came *this* close to having me translate *Marginal*…. Maybe a few impassioned letters might convince them to take the plunge…?) See you next time. ✯

Japan's Manga Top Ten

The Bestselling Comics, Compiled by Books Nippan, Japan (Manga Released As Of 3/31/93)

1	***Bastard!! • 13***	Kazushi Hagiwara • Shueisha • ¥390
2	***Ranma 1/2 • 24***	Rumiko Takahashi • Shogakukan • ¥390
3	***Akira • 6***	Katsuhiro Otomo • Kodansha • ¥1200
4	***Mobile Police Patlabor • 17***	Masami Yuki • Shogakukan • ¥390
5	***Ushio and Tora • 14***	Kazuhiro Fujita • Shogakukan • ¥390
6	***Tokyo Babylon • 5***	CLAMP • Shinshokan • ¥580
7	***Crayon Shin-Chan • 5***	Yoshihito Usui • Futabasha • ¥550
8	***Ah! My Goddess • 8***	Kosuke Fujishima • Kodansha • ¥450
9	***Dear Boys***	Hiroki Yagami • Kodansha • ¥390
10	***How Wonderfully Japanesque***	Himuro & Yamaguchi • Hakusensha • ¥390



__Matt Thorn__ has worked as a translator for Viz for a very long time. His many manga projects include **SANCTUARY**, **HOROBI**, **2001 NIGHTS**, **RANMA 1/2**, **MERMAID FOREST** *and now* **MAISON IKKOKU**. *Two years ago he began working on a Ph.D. in anthropology at Columbia University and is currently writing a thesis on Japanese women's comics. Be sure to check out this month's "Animessages," where Matt guest-hosts the lettercol and answers a few of your many letters. As always, Matt can be reached c/o* ANIMERICA • *P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107.*

Fresh From the Forest

The writer of "__From the Forest__" and __Manga no Mori__ manager __Takashi Oshiguchi__ recommends the five hottest manga titles in Japan. Guaranteed ripe for reading!

1 Yaiba
Written by Gosho Aoyama • Published by Shogakukan
A short but masterful swordsman-boy fights ghosts and aliens as though they were in a video game. Broadcast on Japanese television since April.

2 Ghost Sweeper Mikami
Written by Takashi Shiina • Published by Shogakukan
Relax and let yourself enjoy the adventures of beautiful exorcist/private eye Mikami, her assistant, and her rivals in the best tradition of *Urusei Yatsura*. Broadcast on Japanese television since April.

3 Ushio and Tiger
Written by Kazuhiro Fujita • Published by Shogakukan
The friendship and unique rivalry between the hot-tempered Ushio and the ancient monster Tiger is refreshing. Also released as a six-volume OAV (with a second series scheduled for this summer), *Ushio and Tiger* is Fujita's debut work.

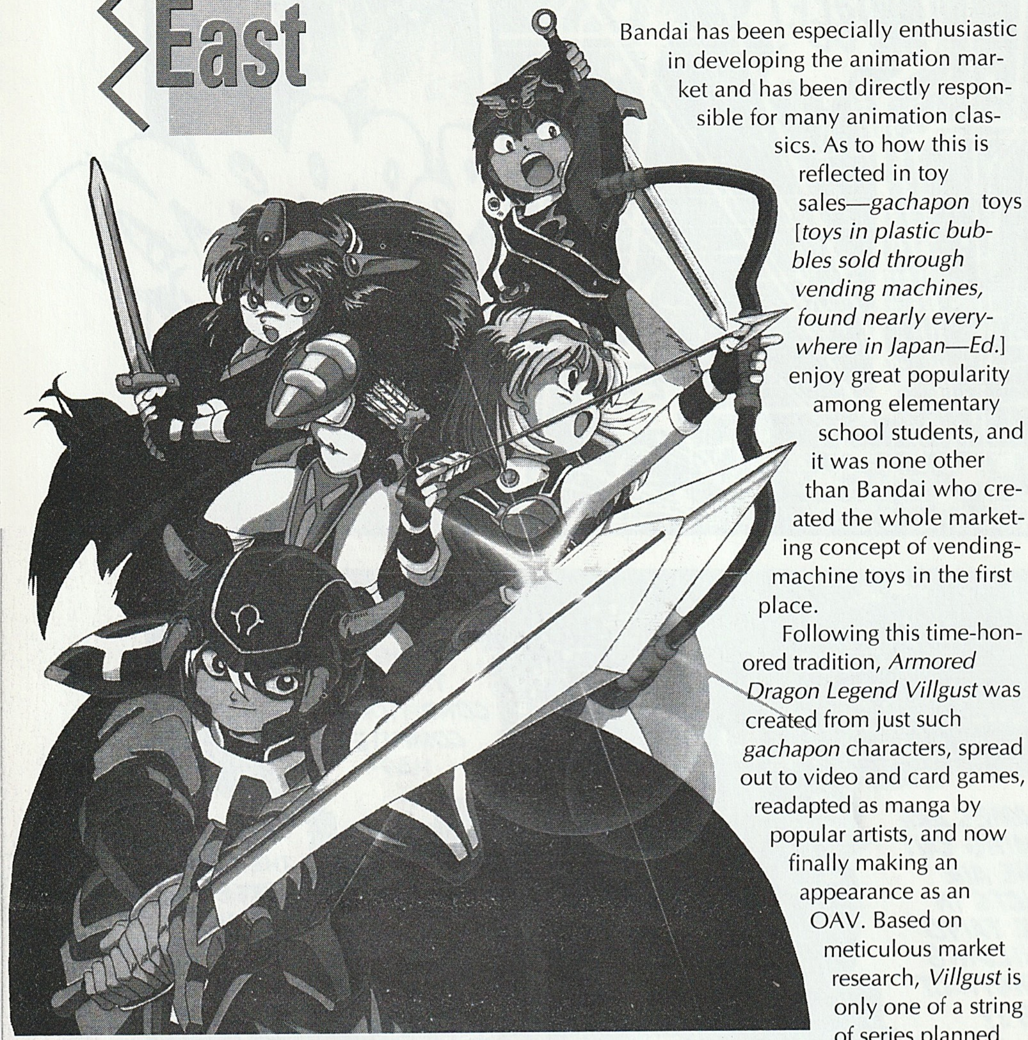
4 Super Bikkuriman
Written by Yoshihiko Ochi • Published by Shogakukan
A one-of-a-kind look at a war between gods and demons taking place in the world of the previous *Bikkuriman* series. Ochi, who draws great mecha, debuts with this series (currently being broadcast as an animated TV show in Japan).

5 The Poltergeist Report
Written by Yoshihiro Togashi • Published by Shueisha
A recently dead juvenile delinquent comes back from the spirit world as a modern-day exorcist (the delinquent part is something I've never run across before). Broadcast in Japan as an animated TV show since last fall.

Japanese Anime Review

BEST OF THE East

More than just entertainment, anime is one of Japan's most valuable (and enjoyable) forms of cross-cultural communication. In this section, ANIMERICA *asks Japanese and U.S. industry professionals to evaluate the latest in this diverting and enriching art form. By* ***Yoshitaka Ishigami***



Armored Dragon Legend Villgust

Sold Thru	**Format**	**Price**
Bandai Visual	VHS/LD	¥4800/¥4800
Length	**Release Date**	**Notes**
Approx. 30 min.	On Sale Now	Two-volume OAV series

From the beginning, the Japanese animation industry has had close ties with the toy industry. Most TV animation has been sponsored by toy companies, and many manufacturers of original animation videos are connected with the same industry. Possibly because of the rather open regulations for children's products in Japan, toy corporations have been able to bring their creativity into full play and have produced the landmarks of animation which have shaped the animation industry of today.

Foremost among the toy manufacturers, Japanese merchandising juggernaut Bandai has been especially enthusiastic in developing the animation market and has been directly responsible for many animation classics. As to how this is reflected in toy sales—*gachapon* toys [*toys in plastic bubbles sold through vending machines, found nearly everywhere in Japan—Ed.*] enjoy great popularity among elementary school students, and it was none other than Bandai who created the whole marketing concept of vending-machine toys in the first place.

Following this time-honored tradition, *Armored Dragon Legend Villgust* was created from just such *gachapon* characters, spread out to video and card games, readapted as manga by popular artists, and now finally making an appearance as an OAV. Based on meticulous market research, *Villgust* is only one of a string of series planned with this type of multimedia development in mind from the outset, and this trend in animation shows no signs of weakening yet.

Based in a typical fantasy role-playing world, a group of characters with striking individual personalities travel on a journey of adventure. In animating the story, veteran voice actors have been utilized for the all-important voices including Tomoyuki Morikawa ("D Boy," *Tekkaman Blade*) as Kui, Aya Hisakawa ("Ami Mizuno/Sailor Mercury," *Sailor Moon*) as Chris, Hikaru Midorikawa ("Android No. 16," *Dragon Ball Z*) as Yuta, Maya Okamoto ("Yuki Saiko," *Silent Möbius*) as Fanna, Kappei Yamaguchi ("male Ranma," *Ranma 1/2*) as Bostov, Chisa Yokoyama ("Ferris," *Black Magic M-66*) as Lükia, Akio Otsuka ("Gato," *Gundam 0083 Stardust Memory*) as Mlobo, and Junpei Takiguchi ("Raizo Kuki," *Agedama-Kun*) as Gabadi.

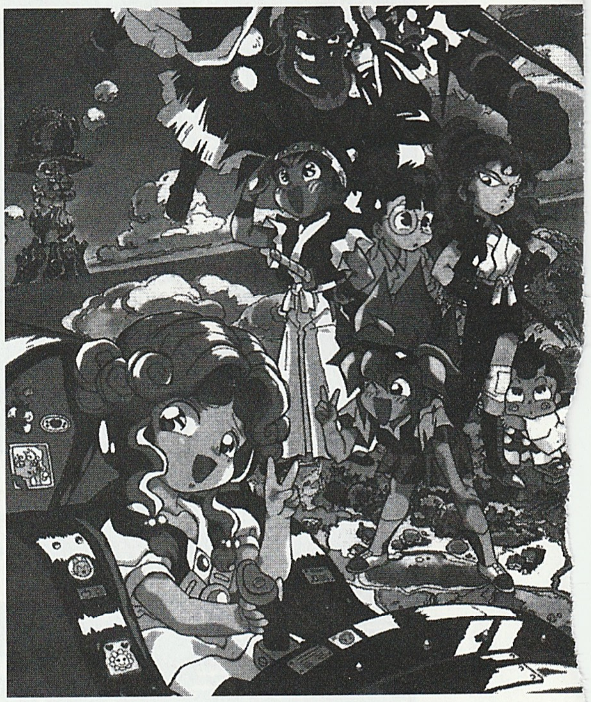
One of an army of talented staff members working on the animated *Villgust* is character designer Kosuke Fujishima, currently enjoying popularity as a manga artist (*Ah! My Goddess* and *I'll Arrest You*). Fujishima's relentlessly cute character designs, verging on the super-deformed [*shamelessly cute versions of characters, shrunk to childlike proportions—Ed.*] genre, perfectly illustrate the upbeat mood of the video.

The series director is none other than Satoru Akahori (*Shurato, Video Girl Ai*) popular for his sexually teasing style. Katsuhiko Nishijima (director, *Project A-Ko*) lends his talent for clean-up on the final animation draft, while storyboards are drawn by Takeshi Mori. The music is written by the veteran Kohei Tanaka. *Villgust* is an original work which certainly does not betray fan expectations.

Takamaru

Sold Thru	**Format**	**Price**
Bandai Visual	VHS/LD	¥4800/¥4800
Length	**Release Date**	**Notes**
27 min.	On Sale Now	Six-volume OAV series

This is an epic OAV series from Toyo'o Ashida, known as the producer of the popular *Magical Princess Minky Momo, Galactic Castaway Vifam, Wataru* and *Granzord*, combining his talent with Studio Live, provider of such juvenile-themed anime as *New Century GPX Cyber Formula 11* and *Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon*. In the anime world, Ashida is known not only for his superb sense of slapstick and ability as a



producer, but also for diligently pursuing a dialogue with his fans.

From the days of yore, Ashida has maintained a column in Minori Shobo's publication *Out* magazine to hold conversations with fans, and he's always valued fan input. Always an animator with children in mind, his main concern these days is the increasing age of animation's general audience, leading to a reduction in the number of wholesome children's shows—which might also have the effect of shrinking the future animation market. In answer to this problem, *Takamaru* was created to be a wholesome original animation video which the entire family can watch.

The story takes place on an imaginary island called the "Champon Kingdom" that continues the Edo era (samurai) lifestyle. Ashida depicts the importance of friendship and courage—themes lost from recent children's shows—through the main character, Takamaru. Released following a previous two-volume mini-series, *Takamaru* is paced just right and ripe for first-time viewers, in contrast to the rather content-heavy first installment.

Voice-actors are all veterans of the anime scene, with Kazu Ikura ("Kaori Makimura," *City Hunter*) as Nozomi Takamaru, Megumi Hayashibara ("female Ranma," *Ranma 1/2*) as Yumega Aruzaemon, Ai Orikasa ("Ling-Ling," *3x3 Eyes*) as Kagayaku Mirai, Aya Hisakawa ("Ami Mizuno/Sailor Mercury," *Sailor Moon*) as Karin Fox, and Yusaku Yara (Maruko's father, *Chibi Maruko-Chan*) as Zako Takanokami Kaodeka. The cult manga artist Minda Nao is the series director. Animation direction is by Takahiro Yoshimatsu, known as the Studio Live powerhouse from *Cyber Formula*. Music is by the hardworking Kohei Tanaka.

Catching attention from all directions, *Takamaru* may well be a milestone pointing the direction of future original animation videos. It's an invigorating anime to watch.

Download

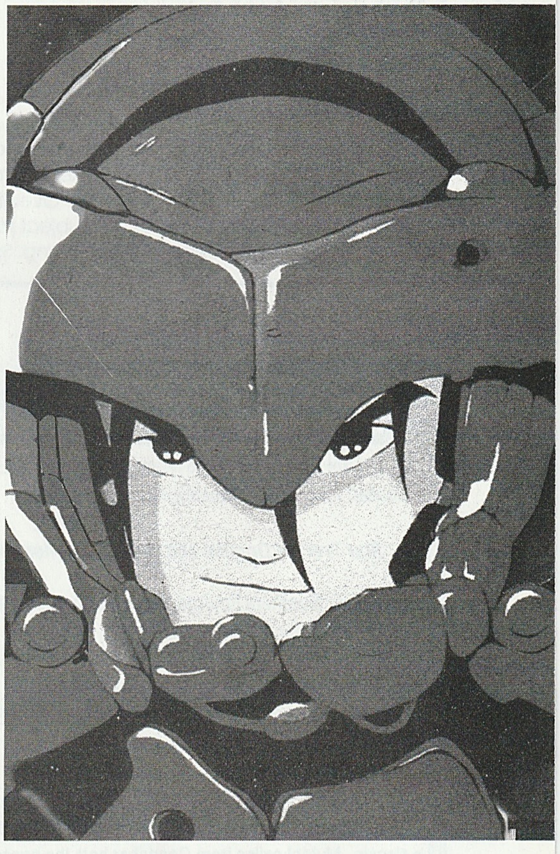
Sold Thru Toei Video	**Format** VHS/LD	**Price** ¥12381/¥6000
Length 47 min.	**Release Date** On Sale Now	**Notes** Not a typo! LD really is half as expensive

First there was the novel *Devil's Circuit* by Wataru Nakajima. Then it was made, into a game for the NEC PC-Engine (Turbo Grafx-16 in the US) and, in the best multimedia tradition, animated. These days, with no shortage of original animation based on game software, this could be seen as yet another investment toward the inevitable future of integrated games and original animation.

Download is about the genius hacker and amorous priest Shido (Toshihiko Seki, "Shurato," *Shurato*) and his fight with the evil corporate Echigoya (Seizo Kato, "Megatron," *The Transformers*) over the mysterious beauty Namiho (Mami Koyama, "Princess Luna," *Harmageddon*). It may be a simple, old-fashioned story, but seeing it animated gives one a strange sense of nostalgia—almost as though you're seeing a movie from the 1970s.

The production has an impressive staff list—direction is by the renowned Taro Rin, director of many classics (*Galaxy Express 999, Harmageddon, Dagger of Kamui*). Character designer Yoshinori Kaneda is the founder of the exaggerated perspectives and meaningless gag explosion scenes (nicknamed "Kaneda action," after the creator) of the type found in *Urusei Yatsura* and the almost totally-gag filled *Birth*. This style dates back to *Daitan 3 the Invincible* (1978) and *The Bumbling Knight Tondera Mancha* (1980), and has been all the rage among Japanese anime fans ever since. In *Download*, the "Kaneda action" is in full force, and the vivacity and unchecked creativity typical of early original animated videos such as *Birth* can be felt throughout.

Animation is from the reputable Madhouse (*Monster City, Midnight Eye Gokuu*). Music is by Hiroshi Katsuyama, a stellar figure from the folksong boom of the 1970s, and a nostalgic name for those who remember the Japanese student movements of that time. In these days, when most anime is concerned with fantasy and cute girls, this kind of work is rare and valuable. It's a bit short at 47 minutes, but *Download* gives the feeling of looking back fondly at the days of computer networks and anime cyberpunk. Recommendable to people who enjoyed the atmosphere of early OAVs. ☆



CD Review

The Compact View

In Japan, animation soundtracks are every bit as legitimate as the latest from Ryuuichi Sakamoto. Even the most humble of anime features are certain to be accompanied by an "official" soundtrack. Each issue in ***The Compact View****, music enthusiast* ***Chris Keller*** *helps you to understand the often confusing world of CDs by reviewing both Japanese and domestic releases.*

Giant Robo, The Animation

Released Thru Emotion	**Order No.** APCM-5007
Length 42:52	**Price** ¥3000

Like everything about this epic anime production, the soundtrack for *Giant Robo* is a vividly grandiose spectacle. This is largely due to the inspired performance of the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra. Unlike most anime soundtracks which are performed by small studio orchestras with the assistance of banks of synthesizers, *Giant Robo, The Animation* creates a concert hall atmosphere with a full rich sound and such superb musicianship that other anime soundtrack albums pale by comparison.

The performances flesh out a score that, while never spectacular, is imaginative enough to keep up with the vividly realized world of the animation. The music clearly demonstrates a John Williams-style influence on its more anthemic pieces, reusing several melody lines in a variety of arrangements for each piece. This contrasts with more of an operatic influence on the darker musical selections.

While only timing out to slightly under 45 minutes, there is a second collection of music from *Giant Robo* in release and I should hope more to come after that. *Giant Robo, The Animation*, while containing some very familiar musical styles, features the performance by the Warsaw Philharmonic (who must be thrilled to be performing non state-approved music for a change) that is superior to many of the so-called "symphonic suite" albums made of other successful anime soundtracks. This is a definitely a highly recommended album for audiophiles. It will overwhelm you with the power of its performance alone.

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Subtitled and Dubbed Anime Review
BEST OF THE
West

The American anime industry has come a long way since the early days of Astro Boy. *Several U.S.-based companies are making it easier than ever for non-Japanese-speaking fans to keep up with their favorite shows. In this section,* ANIMERICA *takes a look at the best in English subs and dubs. By* **Rick Sternbach**

Bubblegum Crisis

Sold Thru AnimEigo	**Format** Subtitled VHS/LD	**Price** $34.95/$64.95	**Length** Varies
Release Date On Sale Now	**Translation** Varies	**Notes** All eight volumes now on LD	

In the world of anime watchers, particularly those who track the rights, licenses and distribution of U.S. releases, *Bubblegum Crisis* had always been high on the list of anticipated titles. As it turned out, we didn't have to wait very long. Since the release of the short-lived follow-on series *Bubblegum Crash*, AnimEigo has released all eight episodes of *Bubblegum Crisis* on tape as well as on laser discs pressed by 3M.

It seemed from the beginning that *Bubblegum Crisis* was destined for English-language audiences, as most of its title credits and internal graphics are in English. By now, the story of the Knight Sabers, the gals in their super hardsuits, is familiar to most everyone. They are assured a place in history partly due to Kenichi Sonoda's unique, clean character and equipment designs (although his other famous "gals" shine through quite nicely on their own in *Gall Force*, which will be reviewed here in the near future).

When they go bad, the biomech "boomers" and their Genom Corporation creators provide almost endless adversaries for Priss, Sylia, Linna and Nene, set against the equally endless technological plains of Mega-Tokyo. Interestingly, while Priss (an obvious but fun *Blade Runner* reference) is often the most visible hotshot, it is Sylia Stingray who created the secret battle armor and gathered the Knight Sabers together.

The series enjoyed an auspicious beginning in 1987, a slightly uneven middle, and entertaining and lively end in 1990 as the Knight Sabers battle the high-tech corporate evildoers and deal with personal pain. The depth of emotion and interaction makes the characters three-dimensional, even imbedded within the intense action-oriented scenario. Their voices and personalities are distinctly different.

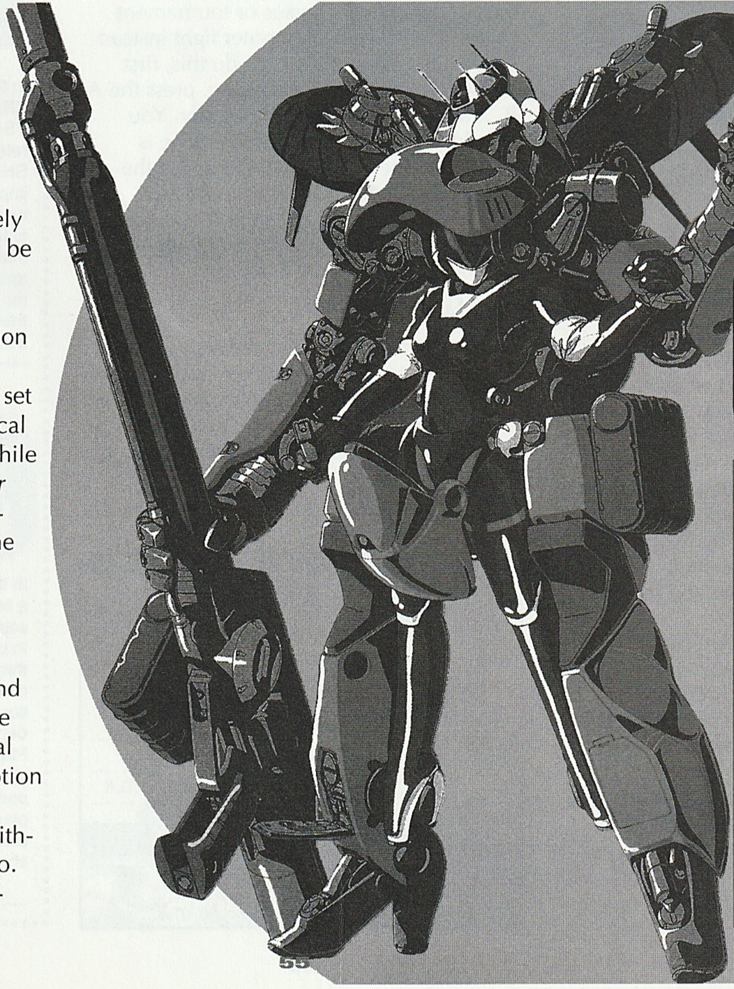
In most respects, the animation quality is sharp, and many of the battle sequences are spectacular. Be aware, however, that the conflicts tend to be a bit bloody. The effects animation is meticulously conceived, especially in the last two installments, *Double Vision* (#7) and *Scoop Chase* (#8). These two may well represent the series' crowning achievements. As with others in the series, these episodes are typified by a highly cinematic style. Pay close attention to the use of music, flashbacks, montages, black and white scenes, fades and similar techniques. The mecha designs explode, float, roar and transform all across the screen, and the girls' hardsuits seem like Soroyama's sexy robots come to life.

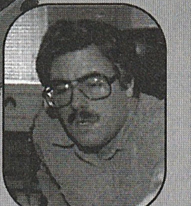
The music, a hallmark of the series, ranges from taut, loud rock to spooky background pieces, upbeat theme songs and plaintive ballads. "Twilight," the final cut from the fourth episode (*Revenge Road*), is a rich example of this last category. The individual episode CDs as well as the two vocal collections are well worth having.

AnimEigo's subtitled tapes and discs provide us with an amazingly affordable duplicate of the original import videos. This, finally, is the turning point in anime collecting, when the U.S. side no longer need rely on costly imports. The LDs are particularly well-executed; comparison plays of the originals reveal the subtitled pressings to be bang-on in clarity and color. The digital sound of the LDs, played through a stereo system, is every bit as good as the original. The subtitles are eminently readable, and employ the familiar convention of different colors for dialogue, lyrics and simultaneous dialogue. Although some releasing companies might consider subtitling enough, AnimEigo has given us extensive liner notes, including production technicalities and anecdotes, plus translated song lyrics and synopses.

It is gratifying to see this impressive body of work made easily available here. As one of the premiere action-anime OAV series, *Bubblegum Crisis* deserves having some shelf space found for it. ✰

Starting next month, we're going to do things a little differently. The number of new releases each year is rapidly outstripping a monthly column's ability to cover them one by one, so we'll examine one major title and a handful of other notable films. Who could have thought the floodgates would open so soon?





***Rick Sternbach** is best known for his work as senior illustrator/technical consultant on* STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION *and the* STTNG *spin-off* DEEP SPACE NINE. *He has twice been honored with science fiction's prestigious Hugo Award for Best Artist, and won an Emmy as an assistant art director on the PBS series* COSMOS. *His list of favorite anime goes at least as long as his art credits, and when he's not wheedling* STTNG*'s writers into including anime in-jokes in the scripts, he studies Japanese with his young son Josh through his abundant anime laser disc collection.*

AV Interface

Ever wanted to play a character from your favorite anime or manga? Video games can add a whole new dimension to enjoying anime. Each month, ANIMERICA's video game experts share tips and advice to help you achieve your highest score ever. By ***James Teal***

Dragon Ball Z, "Super Legendary Battle"

System	Type	Manufacturer
SNES	Action	Bandai
Price	**Available**	**Notes**
¥9800	On Sale Now	16-megabit version of the popular series

Followers of *Dragon Ball* and *Dragon Ball Z* are sure to be pleased with this recent Super Famicom release based on the incredible battles featured in manga artist and *Dragon Ball* creator Akira Toriyama's long-running series. Set up in the standard layout for one-on-one fighting games, "Super Legendary Battle" has many features which make it stand out including 16 megabits of memory and some programming "backdoors" which allow you to do some special things.

☐BASIC PLAY

Dual-screen format and special *hissatsu waza* ("finishing moves") set "Super Legendary Battle" apart from other fighting games. Once dual-screen mode is invoked, characters may take to the sky and fight an aerial, ground or surface-to-air duel. Hand-to-hand or ranged combat may be employed, while a translucent radar at the top of the screen keeps track of relative positions. When contestants are sufficiently separated by distance (and their power meters are high enough), your *hissatsu waza* may be used to bring the match to a satisfying (if devastating) conclusion.

☐THREE MODES OF PLAY

You may select up to three different modes of play—"versus," "contest of champions" or "story" mode. In "versus" mode, a player may challenge the computer (or another player) to a series of duels, selecting for fighter, opponent, game levels, setting, background music and other handicapping functions. In "contest of champions" or *tenka ichi budoka* mode, up to eight players may compete in a series-based elimination tournament (the computer randomly selects order). In "story" mode, players start off with main character "Son Gokuu" battling various characters from the series (who sometimes then become your companions). If you can manage to defeat all these characters, you must defeat a "perfect" Cel at his own "Cel game."

Sounds difficult? Don't worry—players are allowed to select various "superpowered" modes for characters such as "Super Saiyan" Gokuu and "Super Namekian" Piccolo. Good luck!

☐TRICKS OF THE TRADE

One thing players often wonder in fighting-type games is whether they may pit a character against itself in versus mode, or play the "boss" characters reserved for the computer. Usually the answer is no, but in "Super Legendary Battle" you may take advantage of some special programming "backdoors"...if you know the tricks of the trade.

TO PLAY A CHARACTER AGAINST ITSELF: While the screen of young Gokuu and Kuririn in their apprentice days is showing, take controller #1 and press UP, X, DOWN, Y, LEFT, LEFT BUTTON, RIGHT, RIGHT BUTTON. If you do this right, you'll hear a chime and then you'll be able to play head-to-head against yourself, hear additional sounds not included in the normal game (such as characters who laugh and swear at their doppelgängers when certain moves are executed or blundered), even fill all eight slots of the tournament with the same character.

TO PLAY BOSS CHARACTERS: Press the RESET button and repeat the procedure. A voice will indicate success. You now have access to the five remaining characters ("Super Saiyan" Gokuu and Vegita, Trunks, Gohan and "perfect" Cel). Another trick you may accomplish in versus or tournament mode is to have the computer fight instead of the designated player. To do this, first pause the game. While pausing, press the A, B, X and Y buttons simultaneously. You should hear a beep. When the game is unpaused, the computer will control the chosen character. Repeat to undo the process. You now have the potential to set up a fight and then sit back and watch as the computer does all the work.

☐ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

The instruction booklet and the "command help" menu provides a fairly comprehensive list of maneuvers and the steps needed to execute them. As with some other games on the market, "Super Legendary Battle" is replete with secret moves.

KEY:U = UP, D = DOWN, B = BACK, T = TOWARD, P = PUNCH, K = KICK, S = SPECIAL

CHARACTER NAME	MOVE	KEY COMBINATION
SUPER SAIYAN GOKUU	Kick Combo	DB, D, DT, T, R
PICCOLO	Mystic Attack	T, DT, D, DB, B, R
VEGITA (BOTH)	Super Dash	T, B, T, P
FREEZER	Spiral Tail Attack	B, DB, D, DT, T, R
ANDROID No. 20	Death Lancer	T, B, T, P
ANDROID No. 18	Bloody Dance	D, DT, T, P
CEL	Buster Kick	T, DT, D, DB, D, K
ANDROID No. 16	Hurricane Crusher	T, B, T, P
TRUNKS	Tornado Shot	B, DB, D, DT, T, R
GOHAN	Explosive Punch	T, B, T, P
PERFECT CEL	Perfect Attack	DB, UT, K

Fast-Forward Japan

New and Upcoming Video Game Releases

Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon

System	Type	Manufacturer
PC Engine	Unknown	Banpresto
Price	**Available**	**Notes**
No Price Set	No Date Set	One of Banpresto's first entries into the PC Engine format

Not only are the girls of SAILOR MOON making appearances in television, manga and even a musical [*see "Dateline Japan"—Ed.*] these days, everyone's favorite sailor-suited sweethearts are coming soon to a game system near you. Banpresto, a division of merchandising juggernaut Bandai (maker of superdeformed or "SD" games based on GUNDAM, ULTRAMAN and other popular series for the SNES and NES) will be featuring the five SAILOR MOON girls in a new PC Engine game. Unfortunately, as of this writing no release date, type, availability or price has been disclosed. Stay tuned!

Ys IV: The Dawn of Ys

System	Type	Manufacturer
PC Engine w/CD-ROM	Action-RPG	Hudson Soft
Price	**Available**	**Notes**
No Price Set	December	About 30% completed

In the last issue of ANIMERICA we featured a new SNES-only release of YS IV: MASK OF THE SUN. YS IV: THE DAWN OF YS is a PC-Engine only release with an original story different than the SNES version. Gameplay will be similar to yet improved upon YS I and II and will be an action/role-playing game featuring a two-dimensional field map. Familiar characters from YS I and II will make an appearance as will several new characters. Set immediately after the events of YS I and I, the story of YS IV will reveal for the first time ever the origins of Ys. Average playtime is predicted to be about 30 hours.

Graduation

System	Type	Manufacturer
PC-Engine w/CD-ROM	Simulation	NEC Avenue
Price	**Available**	**Notes**
¥7800	Summer	Personal computer game adapted for the PC-Engine

In this simulation game players are cast in the role of a new instructor at an all-girls high school who must see five "problem" girls through to their graduation. In order to make sure that your wards make it through, players must increase the attributes of the five students using a well-balanced mix of instruction, encouragement, discipline and understanding, depending upon the personalities of the girl involved. Players may set parameters for his own "teacher" character by choosing birthdate, bloodtype, hobbies, personality type and, of course, name. At times, players may be forced to make decisions which cross the line between the teacher/student relationship...what will *you* choose?

—Toshifumi Yoshida

Letters from Our Readers

Animessages

(with guest columnist Matt Thorn)

Yowza. I asked for a flood of letters and I got one. Your enthusiastic response to my April column on girls' or *shojo* manga has earned me the right to elbow aside Editor Trish this month and bask in that special glow reserved for the ANIMESSAGES Czar (or Czarina, as the case may be). I was excited to see that the subject of manga by and for women seemed to strike a chord in that seven percent of ANIMERICA's readership which is female. Onto your letters!

Mr. Thorn,

I would like to thank you for your column in the April '93 issue of ANIMERICA. It is the first American article on *shojo* manga I have seen since Schodt's *Manga, Manga* and certainly way overdue.

I am certain you have heard of what one friend has tagged "manga fangirls" at various science fiction conventions, and of the fanzines produced, based largely on *shojo* manga, by such ventures as Canada's "Anime House," so you do know that there are more *shojo* manga fans out there. It must be a rather interesting position, I must agree, to be a male *shojo* manga fan.

I do hope your work inspires enough interest for companies like Viz to consider translations of *shojo* manga. Yes, manga and anime are mainly the hobbies of young men, but for female fans, translations of Takemiya's *Song of Wind and Trees* or Aoike's *Eroica Yori Ai o Komete* (which, I've found, makes some men—Led Zeppelin fans—wince for the obvious "visual inspiration" of Dorian, James, Bonham and Klaus) or perhaps Kawasou's *Touring Express* would be quite welcome. I do look forward to your book on *shojo* manga, and wish you luck and fortune with that venture. Just a small "thank you" for your work and for your time.

Sharon Ouchi
Kailua, HI

Thanks for your sympathy and support. Actually, I hadn't heard of the "manga fangirls" phenomenon (remember, I'm a stranger to anime fandom) but I'll check it out. Led Zeppelin? The possibility of a connection never occured to me. The tall, long-haired androgynous leading male was a shojo manga standard in the '70s (Eroica *appeared in 1977), and continues to be popular today. This was clearly influenced by hippie fashion, but I don't think Yasuko Aoike was making a direct reference to Plant et al.*

Dear Matt Thorn,

As I am stuck on a molasses-in-January-esque Long Island railroad train back from I-Con at midnight, I decided to take the ANIMERICA editor's suggestion and write in to comment on your "Extreme Close-Up" article on *shojo* manga. Actually, I probably would have anyway—I thought the piece was one of the most interesting things I've ever read about comics. Is there any chance of your Ph.D. thesis being published after it's finished, so we could all see the rest of it?

Based purely on your relatively brief description of *shojo* manga in the article (since I've never actually seen any of them myself), I wonder if these "girls' comics" visual metaphors really are all that unique compared to anything except the more rigidly pseudo-"realistic" style of conventional American "boys'" comic books (as opposed to newspaper strips or animation). Frankly, the "not really there" floating flowers you describe sound pretty analogous to traditional American comics motifs like characters seeing stars when bopped on the head, or emitting little hearts to indicate that they're in love.

As for the visual grammar of *shojo* manga taking some getting used to, I'm sure it does, but personally, I sometimes have trouble following action or fight sequences in "boys'" Japanese manga (in translation), too. There was one virtually all-fight-scene issue of *Appleseed* in which I was unable to figure out exactly who was doing what to whom, and why it had the consequences it did, for practically the entire story.

I'm also a bit confused about the whole division between "boys'" and "girls'" comics in Japan. *Tokyo Babylon*, reviewed in the "Best of the East" column, sounds more like a *Horobi* or *Outlanders*-type action/adventure than the sentimental romances you describe as being typical of *shojo* manga, yet the review states that it originated in a girls' comic. And is something like *Urusei Yatsura*, or even the heartstring-tugging teenage soap opera-cum-wacky-comedy *Video Girl Ai* (which I saw some anime of at I-Con) really considered a "boys' comic"? I guess *Urusei Yatsura* must be, at least technically, since Rumiko Takahashi said in her interview that *UY* was serialized in a boys' magazine, although both it and *Ranma 1/2* had a large proportion of female fans.

And just how did a bunch of relatively young women artists apparently manage to overthrow the existing *shojo* manga establishment in the early 1970s and take over? (It still seems a bit mind-boggling to me even that someone like Rumiko Takahashi has one of the highest annual incomes in Japan, since we are constantly being told here that becoming a hostess-like "office lady" is just about the only "professional"-type career an educated Japanese woman can aspire to.)

I hope that these questions, among many others, will be answered in future installments of your column.

Margaret O'Connell
New York, NY

You're right that comics use their own kind of "visual grammar," too, as does any visual medium. Where shojo manga *differs is in the particular visual (and narrative) devices it uses. As for your occasional confusion about fight scenes, I suspect that has less to do with hidden cultural clues than with an artist just pushing it too far. (I had the same problem when I was translating Kia Asamiya's* Gunhed.) *What's the difference between* shojo *and* shonen *manga? That's easy—* shojo *manga is published in* shojo manga *magazines and* shonen *manga in* shonen *manga magazines. Seriously, though, while* shonen *manga tends to emphasize action and struggling to master some skill, girls' manga is primarily concerned with relationships. But don't get the idea that these are sappy, Harlequin-type romances; they are far more complex and artistic than that. Unfortunately, few "pure"* shojo *manga gets made into anime, so most anime fans have never seen the real McCoy. Finally, never trust the American media for an accurate portrayal of Japanese women. Japan is undergoing a gender revolution that just might leave America in the dust. Japanese women are not (and never have been) "Madames Butterfly," nor are all Japanese men die-hard chauvanists.*

Dear Matt,

I was really excited when I read your article in ANIMERICA regarding *shojo* manga. When I was nine years old, I went to Japan with my mother and while waiting for a train I bought my first *shojo* manga. I've been a fan ever since.

Even though I can't read Japanese, I pick up *shojo* manga every time I go to Japan Town in San Francisco. My favorite titles are *Margaret* and *June*. I think that the quality of the art and the stories (visually speaking) are superior to their *shonen* manga counterparts. I really hope you can generate enough interest in *shojo* manga with your column, so that American publishers of Japanese comics (VIZ!) realize that there is an audience out here for translated *shojo* manga.

My first choice for English translation is *Desperate Love 1989*. Minami Ozaki is my favorite *shojo* manga artist. I hope that you or anyone else involved with ANIMERICA does a story on her and her work soon. She is extremely talented.

My second choice for English translation is *Vampire Princess Miyu*. Another visually stunning story. I would also love to see a story or two on the *yaoi* manga phenomenon. Eroticism seems to know no bounds in the *shojo* manga industry. I'm impressed by their seemingly open and non-biased attitude toward sexuality, but confused by some of the more violent extremes I've seen. Japan seems to be a country where sexuality is very repressed, not too unlike America.

Well, good luck with your column and efforts to get publishers interested in *shojo* manga. Please put in my requests to Viz.

Thank you,

Kim Merlo
San Rafael, CA

P.S. Just for your information, I am a 25-year-old female, and my 23-year-old boyfriend enjoys *shojo* manga just as much as I do!

What a great story. My own first brush with shojo manga *was at the not-so-tender age of 22 or so, when a friend recommended I read Moto Hagio's* The Heart of Toma *(see this month's "Extreme Close-Up" for more details). I would say the Japanese are actually far less sexually repressed than Americans. To Westerners, sex is associated with sin. In Japan, what you do behind closed doors and with whom is your own business (not god's), but you are expected to be* discreet *about it.*

Dear ANIMERICA,

First of all, I'm really impressed with your magazine. I was lucky enough to see a visiting friend's copy and fell in love instantly! I especially like the way you list the voice-actors for the OAVs and their previous works. I've always been intrigued by the voice-acting profession and these little touches really made the magazine for me.

My favorite article in the April '93 issue was Matt Thorn's article on *shojo* manga. Finally, someone has recognized that there are manga and anime fans who are more interested in character development than in how many robots and bad guys can be blown up at one time. I enjoy the occasional shoot 'em up story as much as most anime fans, but I really do prefer more of a story most of the time. I do differ with the belief that girls' manga deals exclusively with same-gender relationships. I've spent time in that section of Asahiya Books in Los Angeles and it varies. There are just as many stories devoted to romantic heterosexual relationships. The common thread in these stories is character development.

On that subject, I have a question and I sure hope you can answer it. On page 38, *where* did you get that picture of "Lady Georgie"!? I've been looking for the manga or the anime series for years! I first saw it over ten years ago on public access television (without subtitles). The story centers on Georgie and her stepbrothers, Aberu and Asa, and is set around the turn of the century. The blond in the picture is Doiru, a British nobleman who falls in love with her. The conflict is that Aberu is also in love with her. It's a great adventure and a wonderful love story (and a good example of girls' manga). If you know how to get hold of the manga or the videos, *please* let me know!

Anyway, thanks for the first truly terrific American magazine devoted to anime and manga! As soon as I pick up my own copy, I'm going to subscribe!

Sincerely,

Tracey Dinneen
San Diego, CA

Sorry to disappoint you, but the panel is from the 1975 shojo manga *(and later anime) hit* Candy, Candy *by Yumiko Igarashi and Kyoko Mizuki. We've never heard of* Lady Georgie, *but then again the original Japanese title may be very different. (Don't feel bad; plenty of* shojo manga *from the '70s was set in the turn-of-the-century West.) Maybe one of our readers knows…? If so, drop us a line and help rescue this woman from her living hell.*

Thus ends my fifteen minutes of "Animessages" fame. A thousand thanks for the friendly feedback on what some might consider a genre of minor (or no) interest. Keep those letters coming (on any anime or manga topic), and be sure to tell us if you want your full address printed. As they say in Japan, bai-bai!
—Matt Thorn

Thanks for helping out this month, Matt. I did want to make a comment on your opening salvo about the ANIMESSAGES "Czar (or Czarina, as the case may be)." A Czar is a Czar is a Czar, kiddo. You're the last person I'd expect to be sexist!
—Trish

ANIMERICA *welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to:* **Letters to the Editor, c/o Viz Comics, P.O. Box 77010, San Francisco, CA 94107** *or via electronic mail at* **viz@netcom.com.** *We are unable to answer letters individually. Concise, typed letters have the best chance of being published. We reserve the right to edit for space or clarity.*

The Animessages Poll

Our thanks to everyone who responded to the questionnaire in our March issue. Among other questions, we asked you to list your favorite anime shows, characters and manga. Here's what you told us:

Your Favorite Anime Show

Bubblegum Crisis (Artmic/AnimEigo)

Your Favorite Anime Character

Priss (*Bubblegum Crisis*)

Your Favorite Manga

Ranma 1/2
(Shogakukan/Viz Comics)

You know what they say…practice makes perfect. And we want ANIMERICA to be as perfect as we—and you, our readers—can make it. Please take a moment to answer this month's questionnaire, letting us know which features, columns and departments you liked (or didn't like).

In the meantime, keep sending in your top three (not five) favorite anime shows, characters and manga. We'll print the results in an upcoming issue. Send your completed questionnaires and your "anime/manga favorites" polls by **July 31, 1993** to:

ANIMERICA Readers' Poll
c/o Viz Comics
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, California 94107

Remember—if it's Anime in America, it's Gotta be ANIMERICA!™ We look forward to hearing from you soon.

NAME: AGE: SEX: M F

ADDRESS:

CITY: STATE: ZIP:

My three favorite anime titles:
●
●
●

My three favorite anime characters
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My three favorite manga titles:
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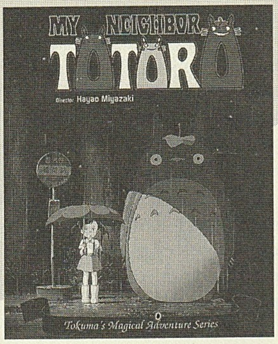
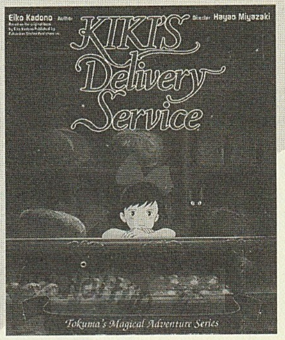
On a Scale 1-10	ANIMERICA July '93
	ANIME FEATURE: "The Whimsy and Wonder of Hayao Miyazaki"
	The ANIMERICA Interview • Greenfield's Guide • Translating *Nausicaä*
	COLOR MANGA FEATURE: *Crimson Pig* by Hayao Miyazaki
	Manga Feature: *AD Police* by Tony Takezaki
	Manga Feature: *Mermaid Forest* by Rumiko Takahashi
	Dateline: Japan
	Dateline: America
	Manga Close-Up
	Extreme Close-Up
	Best of the West
	Best of the East
	The Compact View
	From the Editor
	Between the Covers
	TV Top Ten, Japan
	From the Forest
	Coming Soon in Japan
	Video Clips: Japan
	Anime Q & A
	Video Clips: America
	Coming Soon in America
	Manga Top Ten
	Fresh From the Forest
	AV Interface
	Animessages
	In Our Next Issue…!

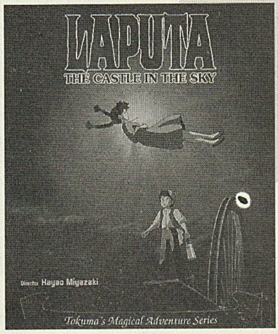
TOTORO COMES TO THE BIG SCREEN. . . WATCH FOR HIM!

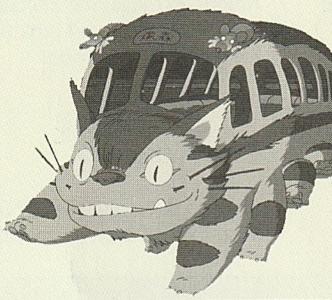
Tokuma is pleased to bring the English language version of My Neighbor Totoro to American theaters. No movie displays the talents of director Hayao Miyazaki better than Totoro. Tokuma first introduced the English version of the book, now the animation fun leaps onto center stage. The initial cities to show the film will soon be announced.

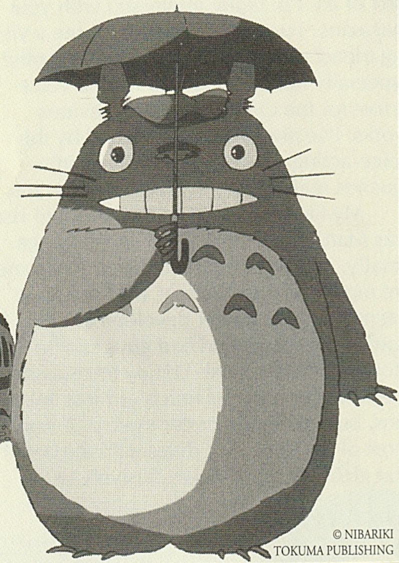
Watch local newspapers for theaters near you. Now American audiences can fully enjoy this unique story, named best animation film and best movie of 1988 in Japan.











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In the Next Issue of ANIMERICA...!

August marks ANIMERICA's sixth month of regular publication and boy, do we have a special celebration planned for you! As the temperature rises, so does the excitement as we continue to bring you three never-before-published manga titles in a single issue—AD POLICE, MERMAID FOREST and THE CRIMSON PIG, the comic which inspired last summer's blockbuster hit, printed the way Miyazaki intended...in full color! Be sure not to miss a single one of these exciting features!

Anime Feature

Masamune Shirow

About him very little is known. Where does he come from? What does he look like? And most importantly, why do some people consider him the reason for the current manga boom in America? ANIMERICA sends our very own ***interviewer par excellence Takashi Oshiguchi*** *to get the inside scoop in the ever-exclusive* ***ANIMERICA Interview; Albert Sze-Wei Wang*** *returns with a* ***profile of Shirow's works****; we go to* ***Shirow's Osaka-based publisher Seishinsha****, the unique, independent publisher of nearly all of his manga; plus a double treat for Miyazaki fans, the second part of our ongoing interview with* ***internationally renowned filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki*** *and the continuation of the* ***CRIMSON PIG*** *comic which inspired* ***last summer's blockbuster hit****.*

Manga Features

The Sixth Chilling Installment in the Horror Masterpiece

MERMAID FOREST

Partake of the mermaid's flesh, the legend says, and you'll live forever. But what happens when you don't want to be immortal anymore? MERMAID FOREST is a uniquely macabre tale from manga wunderkind Rumiko Takahashi and is exclusive to ANIMERICA

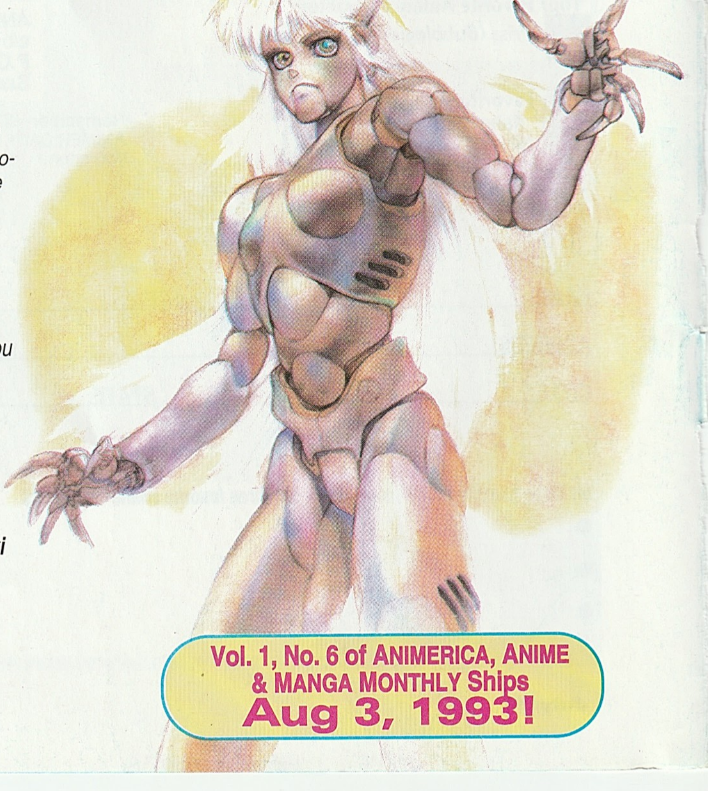
Seventh Installment in the Dark World of Bubblegum Crisis

AD Police

The cyberpunk action continues with the Advanced Defense Police's fight against the evil Genom conglomerate. Based on the popular OAV series of the same name created by Toshimichi Suzuki, the father of BUBBLEGUM CRISIS. Another ANIMERICA exclusive, from the pen of ***Tony Takezaki***

PLUS...

The Latest News from Japan and America
Reviews of the Hottest Subtitled and Dubbed Anime Titles
New Developments in the World of Manga
Results of our Readers' Poll and...
Much, Much More!



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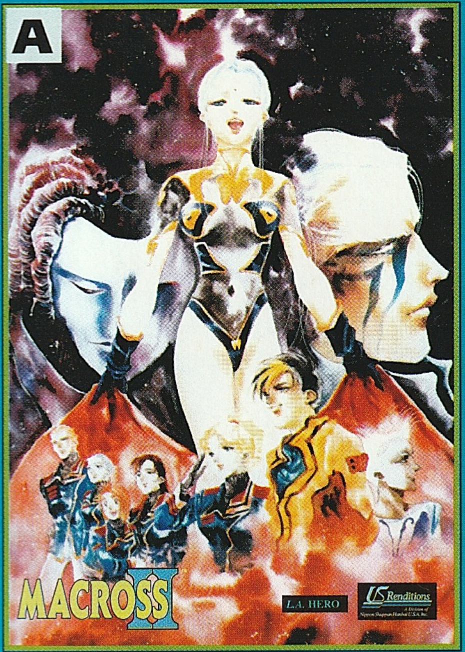
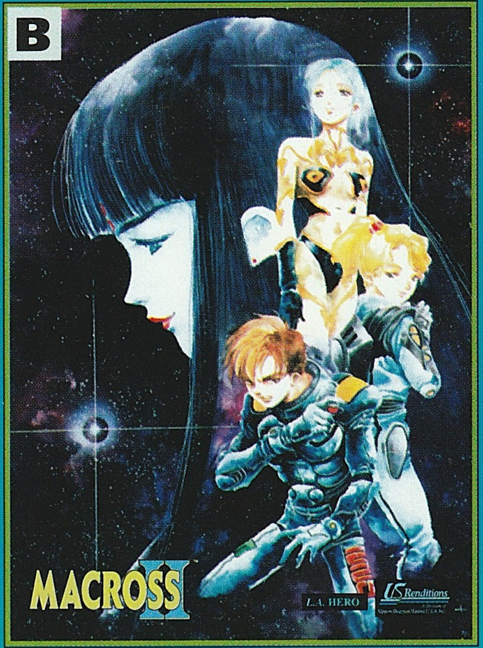
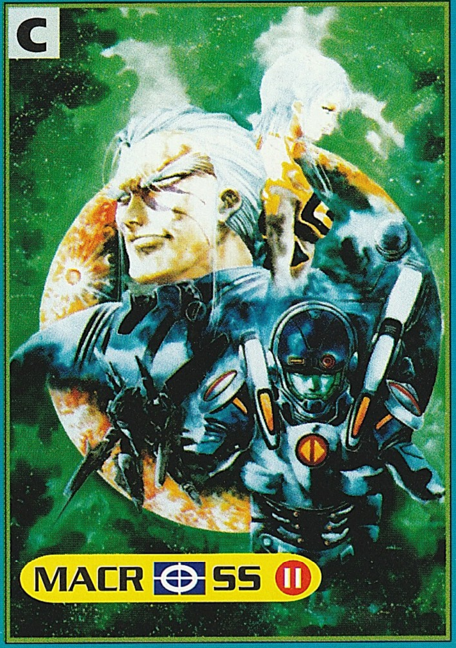






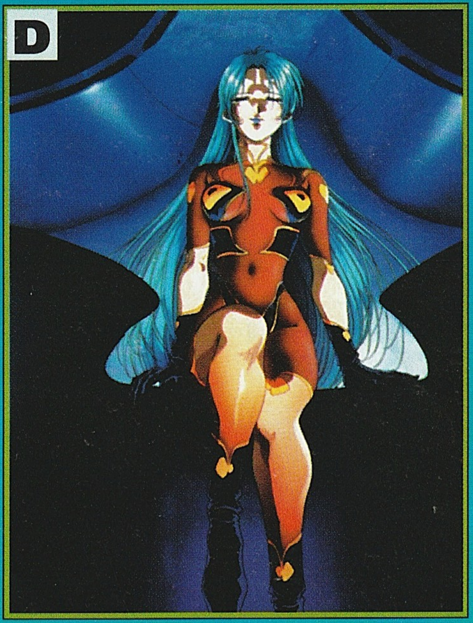
NEW MACROSS II POSTERS !!

A. Sing Along $12.95 25 x 39 full color
This is the final image from the series reprinted on high quality 80 pound linen bond which is heavier than average poster paper. Beatifully illustrated by Haruhiko Mikimoto and featuring the characters of Ishtar, Feff, Ingues, Nexx, Nastasha, Amy, Saori, Silvie, Hibiki, and Mush.

B. Marduk Disorder $12.95 25 x 39 full color
The poster from the most popular episode in the series. Beautifully illustrated by Macross legend Haruhiko Mikimoto; this image is reproduced on high quality 80 pound linen bond which is heavier than average poster paper. Features Hibiki, Silvie, Ishtar and Elensh against space background.

C. Theatrical One-sheet $10.00 27 x 41 1/8 full color
This is the rare movie one-sheet for L.A. Hero / Tara Releasing's full length theatrical version of Macross II. It contains movie version logo and is beautifully illustrated by Haruhiko Mikimoto. Features Hibiki (in flight suit), Marduk Lord Feff, and Ishtar.

D. Ishtar (Viz Comics) $10.00 28 5/8 x 40 1/2 full color
The key image from the series is printed as an oversize poster from Viz Comics. Cel style image by Haruhiko Mikimoto features Ishtar in the Alus Nova.



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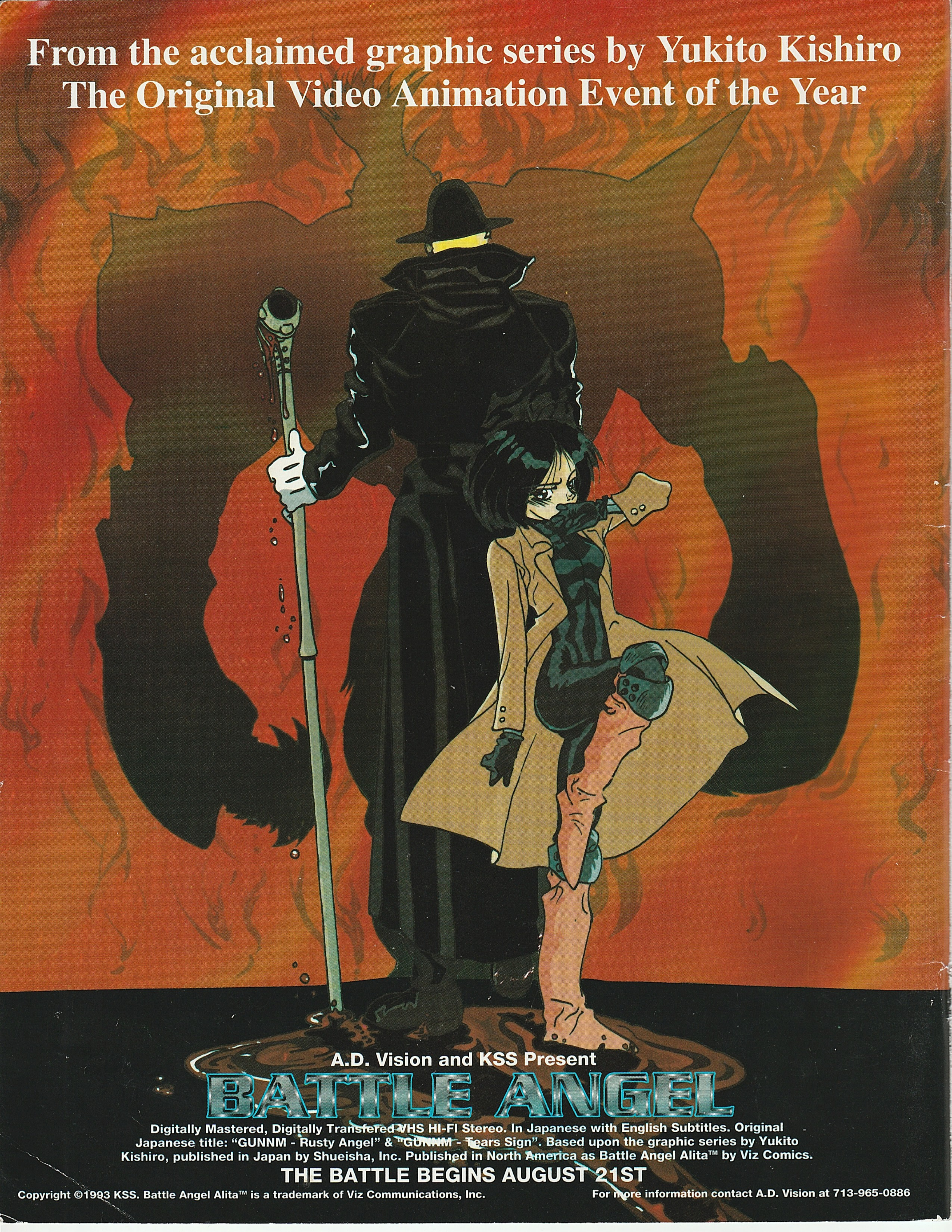

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